THE ANTI-SLAVERY PAPERS OF JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

IN TWO VOLUMES

I

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I

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most interesting chapters of Mr. Scudder's admirable 'Life' of Lowell is that which recounts Lowell's part in the Abolition movement. The part was not a conspicuous one, and might easily be lost sight of in a career crowded as Lowell's was with distinguished activities. All the more easily might his prose contributions to the columns of the Anti-slavery press be overlooked. He himself did not value them highly, counting his poems his chief service to the cause, and the papers have remained uncollected until now brought together in these two volumes. Yet during the seven years of Lowell's association with the Abolition movement, it had no more brilliant advocacy than he gave it in the contributions which appeared usually unsigned save for the initials J. R. L. They were brief, often fragmentary, frequently taking their text from themes of passing interest, and can hardly heighten Lowell's literary reputation. Yet it is not inconceivable that their author might look with pleasure upon the distinction that

is now given them: for they preserve the record of his part, they glow with his enthusiasm, and burn with his anger, in a great moral and patriotic struggle.

The extent of these papers is prime evidence of Lowell's activity in the cause. The two volumes contain more than fifty articles; the first five contributed during 1844 to the "Pennsylvania Freeman;" the rest, between 1845 and 1850, to the "National Anti-Slavery Standard," of which he was for two of these years titular associate editor. Through all the earlier papers runs the fiery zeal which we are accustomed to attribute to the young convert. The implication would seem to be a just one; for the first of the articles was written soon after Lowell's marriage to Maria White, to whom, in Mr. Norton's words, he "owed all that a man may owe to the woman he loves." There were, to be sure, other influences that tended to enlist him in the Abolition cause. Chief of these were the leadings of heredity: the James Lowell who sixty years earlier had brought forward the Anti-slavery clause in the Massachusetts Bill of Rights was Lowell's grandfather; and in his father's dining-room at Elmwood there hung, we are told, a portrait of Wilberforce, the English liberator. But we have his own evidence in a letter written many years later,

that his Abolitionism began in 1840, which was the year of his engagement to Miss White. It requires no stretch of the imagination, then, to see in his love the inspiration of Lowell's service to the cause, and find it fired with a chivalrous quality. Yet his enthusiasm did not make him a thorough-going reformer. That would have meant a change of nature. Compact as he was of poet and of critic, he never had that intense and unwearying devotion which keeps a man like Garrison at his task through thick and thin. His temperament was more mercurial. He was, in fact, surprisingly free from radicalism, and never sympathized with the extreme wing of the Abolitionists in their attacks on the Constitution and their proposals to dissolve the Union. The very first contribution he made to the "Freeman" shows the temper in which he espoused the Anti-slavery movement and which he maintained throughout. "The aim of the true Abolitionist," he wrote there, "is not only to put an end to Negro slavery in America: he is equally the sworn foe of tyranny throughout the world." This temper was by no means incompatible with a power of deep indignation, as the most cursory reading of the papers will show. Lowell seldom exhibited his powers of invective and sarcasm more effectually than here. He was not

mealy-mouthed; nor was he untenacious of his convictions. There is plenty of plain speaking here and no little downright dogmatism, but one finds in these articles little argument, little setting of reason against reason: for that Lowell had not the patience. He confessed to "a certain impatience of mind" which made him "contemptuously indifferent about arguing matters that had once become convictions." He appealed, therefore, directly to the moral principle, and having invoked its authority asked no other, but forthwith laid about him with might and main. In these papers he is generally seen in attack, flashing from point to point wherever a telling blow may be brought home.

In such a struggle all the resources of his ready wit and all the spoils of his wide reading came into effective service. The papers show a surprising range of topics: the Irish Rebellion and the French Revolution, the Church Fathers and American politicians, equally serve his turn for text and illustration. The papers reveal also a like range and variety of moods, from banter and light ridicule to sarcasm and scornful denunciation, and through them all one may see the play of the two characters that met in Lowell's nature, the humorist and the moralist. Whenever he touches upon themes related to religion, the church or the clergy,

the moralist in him mounts the pulpit stairs, but more frequently the voice is the voice of the humorist.

The wit of the papers is perhaps their most marked and pervading literary quality. It lightens the descriptions of politicians and parties, animates the portraits of great figures like Webster, relieves the more strenuous passages of denunciation, and enlivens the occasional bits of argument. But the true vitality of these early compositions is the patriotism which glows through them with unfailing steadiness. Lowell's patriotism was the enduring passion of his life, and it is expressed here with a freshness and ardor that foretell its full flowering in the "Biglow Papers" and the "Commemoration Ode."

Most of the papers included in these two volumes are reprinted from the original manuscripts, now in the hands of Mrs. Sydney Howard Gay, whose courtesy the publishers gratefully acknowledge.

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The first five papers were printed in "The Pennsylvania Freeman;" all the others in "The National Anti-Slavery Standard." The dates given above are those of publication.

ANTI-SLAVERY PAPERS

A WORD IN SEASON

A good test for deciding the soundness of any moral stand which a man has taken is the amount of opposition it excites. Pure truth is poison to the mere natural man, as he is strangely called, — that is, to man in the *un*natural state to which ages of subservience to policy and compromise with wrong have reduced him. With this superinduced and adulterated nature, truth has no sympathy, and cannot assimilate. Hence the virulence with which early reformers are always assailed. Society as then constituted sees that either it or they must perish. If the reformers are madmen or fanatics, Society will be the last to call them by either of these names. They are its choicest weapons against *sane* reformers, and their edge would be blunted by using them too indiscriminately. A madman will prove himself to be such without any extraneous help ; but when the reformer has taken his position in the commanding citadel of some indestructible truth, then the old battering-rams must be brought out again, the old swords sharpened and furbished up, and the

startled spirit of this world can find room in its dainty mouth for obloquy and denunciation. The time has at length come when the charge of *fanaticism* may be brought to bear with effect.

Respectability has a thousand masks, but that of Conservatism is the fairest of them all. Respectability is that which has in itself no essential claim to respect, but depends entirely on external and assumed ones. It is this that clings blindly to things as they are, which dreads change, which trembles when a penetrating eye is turned upon it, and it is with this that reform has always its toughest struggle. Evil, unaided by respectability, would shrink back to its original darkness before the first glance of the terrible eyes of the right. But the great inert mass of respectability lies all around it, like a rampart of insensate cotton bales, calling itself Conservatism. It is this respectability in the community which has been shrieking, *Fanaticism!* at each onward step of abolition reform; and the new position assumed by the American Society seems to have tormented it more than any others. The devil feels the approach of a higher and purer power, and tears his victim the more agonizingly.

I rejoice at the stand which has been taken by the Society. In my eyes it never looked so sublimely as now. It has refused to palter with wrong.

It has refused to fling away its impenetrable *moral* buckler, and to fight the enemy with their own clumsy weapons of politics and guile, in which it has no skill, and with which it would surely be defeated. I am glad that the tree has had such a hearty shaking that all the fruit in which the old worms of worldliness and respectability have laid their eggs, must needs fall.

Abolitionism has its respectable side also, in virtue of being the advocate of Freedom. The poet who can round off a couplet, and the editor who can give sound to the closing of a paragraph by some flourish about freedom and the destiny of America, claims to be an abolitionist. But let abolitionism become anything else than speculative, — let it take one step towards the accomplishment of its object, — and they repudiate immediately with indignation all sympathy with *fanaticism*, yet remain as good abolitionists as before.

Almost every man has his bosom respectability, which has been detected by and has writhed under the Ithuriel-spear of pure abolitionism. The respectability which first took the alarm was that of the church and clergy; the next was that of politics. Respectability is a thing which cares not to stand well with itself; its meat and drink are to stand well with its neighbors. The influence which a man

gains and exercises by his religious profession or his vote is of that palpable kind which is much easier for the ordinary intellect to grasp than that slow-growing but at last irresistible power which results from a steady, conscientious adherence to principle, no matter how sublimated that principle may appear in the eyes of the many. To men whose whole harvest of respect and observance had consisted of a few starved and mildewed ears gleaned from among the thick tares of sectarianism or politics, it seemed little less than an ostracism from all the good and power of this world to withdraw into the quiet privacy of purely moral exertion. But Truth will only be the sure friend and helper of him who trusts wholly and unreservedly to her. If a man lean upon the church or the state, these crutches will sooner or later break under him. If we make anti-slavery political, its victory will be delayed, and when it comes will produce results as unstable as those of a political victory. The aim of the true abolitionist is not only to put an end to negro slavery in America; he is equally the sworn foe of tyranny throughout the world. But if American slavery be politically abolished, the power of the abolitionist will extend no farther. No tall moral beacon-fire will be kindled, flinging its light into the unwilling recesses and hideous caverns of other

oppressions, and making the tyrant shrink and tremble. Evil and wrong can wield the cunning weapons of political management more adroitly than we; but their swords and spears lose temper, and their sinewy arms are palsied by a touch of the olive branch of moral effort. How idle is any attempt to use both, to defeat our enemies with carnal weapons, and then strive to maintain and improve our victory with spiritual ones! As well might the husbandman plough his field with the mad, plunging colter of the cannon ball, and hope to raise a harvest of corn in the furrows by planting gunpowder. All our enemies ask of us is that we should come down from our stronghold, and fight them among their traps and pitfalls, where they are secure, if not of victory, yet of escaping entire defeat. Every time that we accept this challenge, and suffer the necessary check which follows, we weaken our cause, and prepare ourselves for more and worse defeats. We lose the *prestige* with which a series of uninterrupted victories had made us so terrible that the mere unfurling of our white banner was the signal for the enemy's flight; we alienate from us the great sympathies of nature and the soul, hitherto our fastest allies; we can no longer claim that our

> "Friends are exultations, agonies,
> And love and man's unconquerable mind."

TEXAS

The joint resolution for the annexation of Texas, offered by Mr. Milton Brown of Tennessee, passed the House of Representatives at Washington on Saturday, by a majority of twenty-two. Whatever of evil shall result from it must be laid cheerfully at the door of the Democratic party; whatever of good must be ascribed to that kind forethought of Providence which makes evil the protecting husk always to the seed of good.

We say that the blame is to be chiefly ascribed to the Democratic party. They have been the *active agents* in consummating the crime. Even in Massachusetts, where the mass of the people, including a large portion of their own party, were opposed to annexation, they yet (with a bold wickedness more creditable to their honesty than the shuffling policy of the Whigs) made it a main issue in the contest. To Mr. Bancroft belongs the credit of that new and startling discovery in political economy, that to create a market for any kind of produce is the shortest way to destroy the cultivation and export of it.

Annex Texas, said the profound historian, and you strike a blow at the root of slavery. The invention of this principle has been generally ascribed to the philosophic mind of Mr. A. H. Everett, but, though well worthy of his piercing insight and comprehensive views, he must be content to surrender it to the nimbler mind of our American Livy; and he will do this the more readily, since he can claim the undisputed and unenvied patent right to the even more remarkable discovery that the South has always been on the side of freedom, and the North opposed to it, since the adoption of the Federal Constitution. But the apathy of the Whigs had almost as much influence in the passing of the Texas bill as the active villany of the Democrats. It is no fault of either party if slavery be not forever henceforth the ruling spirit of our national policy. If the Whig party had gone into the contest as sincerely opposed to the annexation of Texas as the mass of the Democrats were in favor of it, we have no doubt the result of the presidential election would have been reversed. But a large majority of the Whig party are not, and cannot well ever be, very ardent haters of the slave system. Embracing, as it does, the large capitalists and monopolists of the North, who feel a natural sympathy with the monopolists of the South, it is not to be expected that the Whig party can take a

very decided or honest anti-slavery stand. It is not money or railroads or factories that the Northern monopolist usurps; he lays his selfish hands upon human freedom like his brother at the South, and hence a feeling of unavoidable sympathy between them. The system of labor and of its reward at the North we sincerely believe to be but little better than that at the South. If the Whig party had possessed even a spark of anti-slavery feeling in regard to Texas, the election of a pro-slavery president, instead of extinguishing it, would have fanned it into a flame, and it is as certain to our mind as that the sun shines, that Texas could never be annexed in the face of a decided and stern *conscientious* opposition on the part of even a minority of the people. A very little conscience will overmaster a great deal of policy.

The result conveys a strong lesson of the futility of political action. The opponents of annexation, defeated with the poor weapons of their choice, seem at the same time to have had their moral strength palsied. As soon as the presidential election was decided against Mr. Clay, every professedly anti-Texas Whig exclaimed despondingly, "There is no hope now of keeping out Texas!" As if anything but a pure moral sense in the people would ever have kept it out. The government at Washington, from the President downward, is only a gauge

of the popular virtue, and rises or is depressed accordingly. The vote upon this question presents the singular anomaly of a party totally defeated with Justice, Freedom, Civilization, and Humanity (as it seemed) for their allies! And why? They have endeavored to do battle against evil, with the weapons of evil. Though again and again convinced that their God had one foot of crumbling clay, they still worshipped it even more fervently than ever, and bowing themselves, shouted louder hosannas to their poor idol of man's devising, Expediency. As the Greeks and Romans are said to have built altars to the One God, and to have mingled his worship with that of their own barbarous divinities, so did the Whig party mix empty and formal praises of right and humanity, with their practical worship of a despicable expediency. Could the awful powers which they invoked be pleased with such invocation? Could they otherwise than stand aloof with averted eyes? He doubts the omnipotence of Truth who would serve her by the aid of expediency, and becomes unworthy of her service. A wrong done to the pure spirit of Truth must be avenged, though the wrong-doer may have served her long and well, and may only have erred through a desire to serve her. But the great conscience of the universe is immitigable; its golden scales must come back to

their perfect balance. The avenger is patient; alike to it is a day or a century; yet surely the reckoning shall come.

And how has it been in this matter of Texas? Thousands of the Whig party were no doubt strongly hostile to annexation, we had almost said uncompromisingly hostile to it. But no; the smooth devil of expediency persuaded them into a compromise with the very sin for which they professed the most thorough hatred. What moral invincibility could that party hope for, who gave their vote to a slaveholder for the sake of crushing slavery? What moral power they hoped for we know not; what they had the result of the Texas business has shown too clearly. The fact is, that the people of this country have been so long taught to consider the law of man as paramount to the laws of God that slavery has had at least the merit of speaking out boldly and frankly, while Freedom has hardly dared to whisper above her breath. Wrong has had the shield of authority, and so wholly idolatrous have we become, that even in our churches, the Constitution has taken the place of the Decalogue. Even in debating the subject of annexation, the question of slavery has been a quite subordinate one, and the chief struggle has hinged on the desire for political ascendancy, entertained respectively by the North and the South.

How could the anti-Texas party hope to occupy an impregnable moral position against slavery, after voting for a slaveholder? The anti-slavery feeling of both parties was an article chiefly manufactured to meet the Northern abolition demand, — not to meet the moral, but political demand, — and it was not intended to outlast the election. We firmly believe that if the Northern Whigs in Congress had opposed annexation on rigid anti-slavery grounds; if they could have forgotten for a moment their reverence for a pro-slavery constitution, a sufficient number of Northern Democrats would have been awed into opposition to defeat the measure. But Whigs and Democrats must exhaust all their strength in arguing the constitutional question; and thus it always will be, till the utter worthlessness of that piece of parchment has been so thoroughly illustrated by the rejection of its authority by all good men, that politicians instead of asking *Is it constitutional?* shall be compelled to ask *Is it right?*

After all, the saddest part of the matter is that the moral sense of the mass of the people should be so dead, their intelligence in political affairs so limited, that they can be willing not only to submit to this iniquity, but to sustain it. That the mere catchword of *extending the area of freedom* could be sufficient to draw them all shouting after the Jugger-

naut car of Slavery is enough to make one sick at heart. But, by showing us the source of the evil, it shows us also where and how the remedy is to be applied. It is an additional incitement to our courage, our zeal, and our devotion, by proving to us that the work we have to do is greater than we had expected; that we cannot look closely at any social wrong without finding out its inextricable connection with all others; and that the abolition of American negro slavery is but a small part of our work as reformers. These relics of the stern winter of barbarism only lie safely in the shadow of the selfish walls and fences which intersect our social condition. Pull these down, and give the sun of humanity free leave to shine, and they would melt imperceptibly away, fertilizing the soil they once encumbered. All the different efforts of reform tend in the same direction. The temperance man and the abolitionist are led to the feet of the same great fact by different paths.

But the advocates of slavery will find that they have not advanced a single step even if they succeed in annexing Texas. Slavery is but the weaker for this seeming triumph. Every success of wrong is a step toward its annihilation. What if five or six score of men come together at Washington, and say that the institution of domestic slavery shall be ex-

tended and perpetuated? How stands the case then? When the question is asked, *Shall slavery be fostered and strengthened?* a few pitiful political hacks and time-servers answer Yes! But is slavery thereby made the stronger? Before making up our minds let us count the votes on the other side. The voice of God speaking through the divine instincts of our nature says No! The indignant conscience of every good man in the country says No! Justice turns away her mournful face and says No! Religion presses the cross closer to her heart and says No! Freedom looks up with the young light of hope in her eyes and smiling says No! Every feeling of our common humanity rouses itself in the soul and in the heart and says No! We are reconciled to the slaveholders' majority of twenty-two.

THE PREJUDICE OF COLOR

THERE is nothing more sadly and pitiably ludicrous in the motley face of our social system than the prejudice of color. As if no arrangement of society could be perfect in which there was not some arbitrary distinction of rank, we Democrats, after abolishing all other artificial claims of superiority, cling with the despair of persons just drowning, in the dreadful ocean of equality, to one more absurd and more wicked than all the rest. An aristocracy of intellect may claim some leniency of judgment from the reason, and there are certain physiological arguments to bolster up an aristocracy of birth; but a patent of nobility founded on no better distinction than an accidental difference in the secreting vessels of the skin would seem ridiculous even to a German count who had earned his title by the more valid consideration of thirty-six dollars. Or is it in some assumed superiority of intellect that the white man finds his claim to enslave his colored brother? In that case the most

exclusive of this chromatic *noblesse* would stand in imminent peril of the lash of the overseer at the South, or of the editor (who occupies the position and discharges the duties of that distinguished member of our democratic system) at the North. For we assume it as a primary step in our argument that, when the moral vision of a man becomes perverted enough to persuade him that he is superior to his fellow, he is in reality looking up at him from an immeasurable distance beneath.

Regarding the American people as a professedly Christian people, their anti-Christian prejudices are at first sight astonishing enough. Were this the place, the greater part of them might be traced to the timidity and unfaithfulness of the Church, which to most men supplies the place of a conscience, and whose sacredness, instead of being founded immutably upon a living inward principle, rises and falls with the popular lukewarmness or zeal. Claiming to be of divine origin and appointment, its main occupation would nevertheless seem to be to prove by its subservience to popular fallacies that it is merely a mechanical contrivance of man's ingenuity — a labor-saving national conscience. Our people go once or twice in a week to hear the praises of meekness, humanity, and forbearance, so curiously intertwined with theological dogmas that the latter

seem equally sacred with the former, and then go home to practise the very reverse of these virtues without the slightest perception of their inconsistency. For example, the black men, having endured unparalleled hardships and oppressions with resignation and patience, are despised as wanting in spirit and capacity, while the red men, having returned blow for blow, — having displayed, perhaps, more hideous qualities than any other savages, — become the theme of novels and romances, are made the subject of rhymes almost as atrocious as one of their own war songs, and furnish even our children's books with pernicious examples of utterly barbarous and pagan virtues. This proves that we give only a theoretical assent to the doctrines of Christ, and that, like Louis the Eleventh of France, though we wear the badges of our religion most conspicuously, we contrive adroitly to hide them away whenever it suits our convenience to break any of its commandments.

Meanwhile, as a prophecy is sometimes known to bring about its own fulfilment, the national prejudice against the colored race is fast producing a plentiful crop of statistical facts on which to base an argument in its own favor. The colored people of the so-called free states are still held in slavery by something stronger than a constitution, more

terrible than the cannon and the bayonet, — the force of a depraved and unchristian public opinion. We shut them rigidly out from every path of emulation or ambition, and then deny to them the possession of ordinary faculties. No talent will show itself till there is a demand for its exercise, and then it leaps spontaneously and irresistibly into vigorous action. The proportion of degraded whites in this country is to the full as great as that of the colored population; it is infinitely greater if we consider the respective opportunities of the two races.

The oppressor has always endeavored to justify his sin by casting reproach upon the moral or intellectual qualities of the oppressed. The Romans held their miserable victims in contempt, until Spartacus displayed a military genius and a heroism which their ablest generals were unable to make head against until his little army was divided against itself. Yet these very slaves were among the ancestors of two nations now the most distinguished in Europe, the one for philanthropy and profound scholarship, the other for science. The Norman barons (a race of savages, strong chiefly in their intense and selfish acquisitiveness, to whom our Southern brethren are fond of comparing themselves) looked upon their Saxon serfs as mere cat-

tle, and indeed reduced them as nearly as might be to that degraded level by their cruelty. Yet these very serfs were part and parcel of that famous Anglo-Saxon race, concerning whom we have seen so much claptrap in the newspapers for a few years past, especially since the project of extending the area of freedom has been discussed and glorified. A still more prominent example may be found in the case of the Jews, who by a series of enormous tyrannies were reduced to the condition of the most abject degradation among nations to whom they had given a religious system, and who borrowed from them their choicest examples of eloquence and pathos and sublime genius. Here was and is a people remarkable above almost all others for the possession of the highest and clearest intellect, and yet absolutely dwarfed and contracted in mind by being sternly debarred from any but the very lowest exercise of mental capacity. But they had the advantage of a less palpable outward distinguishment from the nations among whom they underwent their latest and worst captivity, and a few of them have been enabled to raise themselves to power and distinction — but never *as Jews*.

With us the color is made the most prominent feature. The newspapers can never say simply man or woman in speaking of the African race; they

must always prefix the badge of inferiority, and in the same way that they say the *Honorable* Member of Congress or the *Reverend* Doctor of Divinity to excite our favorable sympathies, they say a *colored* man or woman to indicate that there is no need of our troubling our sympathies at all. Nor is this the worst. Though it is a part of the religious faith of our Northern editors, and a part (apparently) of their constitutional compact of fealty to the South, to consider the colored race as incapable of high civilization, as incapable indeed, even of manhood, yet, so surely as a colored man commits any offence, a paragraph runs the rounds of our newspapers, religious and all, headed "*a black ruffian*," as if his color were an aggravation of his offence, instead of being, according to their own standard, a palliation of it.

It has always seemed to us that abolitionists could in no way more usefully serve their holy cause than by seeking to elevate the condition of the colored race in the free states, and to break down every barrier of invidious distinction between them and their privileged brothers. We know that a great deal has been done, but we think that it has not been made sufficiently a primary object. A few such men as Douglass and Remond are the strongest anti-slavery arguments. The very look and bearing

of Douglass are eloquent, and are full of an irresistible logic against the oppression of his race.

We have never had any doubt that the African race was intended to introduce a new element of civilization, and that the Caucasian would be benefited greatly by an infusion of its gentler and less selfish qualities. The Caucasian mind, which seeks always to govern, at whatever cost, can never come to so beautiful or Christian a height of civilization, as with a mixture of those seemingly humbler, but truly more noble, qualities which teach it to obey. While our moral atmosphere is so dense and heavy with prejudice, it will be impossible for the colored man to stand erect or to breathe freely. Even if he make the attempt, he can never attain that quiet unconsciousness so necessary to a full and harmonious development, while he is continually forced to resist the terrible pressure from without. It is for us to endeavor to reduce this atmosphere to the true natural weight, and so struggle as manfully and earnestly and as constantly also against the slave system of the North as against that of the South. Had we room we might easily prove by historical examples that no race has ever so rapidly improved by being brought into contact with a higher civilization (even under the most terrible disadvantages) as the one of which we have been speaking.

THE CHURCH AND CLERGY

At the recent Third Party Convention held in this city, a resolution was adopted which declared, in substance, that the members of that party have nothing to do with the assailants of the church and clergy. The same convention, with true political consistency, passed other resolutions expressive of their entire and undiminished confidence in James G. Birney, who, we believe, was the first who had the sagacity to perceive and the courage to assert that "the American churches were the bulwarks of American slavery." The Third Party have been acute enough to understand that the church will be a powerful engine wherewith to build up their political supremacy. Pure Christianity was quite too clumsy and old-fashioned an affair to be of much service in caucuses and mass-meetings; but here was a machine, with all its parts in complete repair, and all its joints oiled and polished, ready to their hand. There is no such short and easy way to popularity among the thoughtless and uneducated portion of the people as that of assuming to be the

defender of their religious prejudices, however absurd and monstrous they may be. When a system has become corrupt, an indifferent skepticism gradually pervades the more refined and intellectual classes of society, while the zeal of the brutal and unintelligent in its defence becomes proportioned always to the nearness of its approach to their sympathies and tastes, and the indulgence it allows to their appetites. It was so with the Pagan systems of Greece and Rome; it was so with Judaism; it was so with Catholicism; it is so with Protestantism. It was the Jewish populace that cried out, "Crucify him!" when Jesus stripped the sacred mask from the faces of the priesthood; it was the mob of Athens that condemned Socrates to the hemlock; and doubtless the haranguers and demagogues who acted as counsel in those respectable tribunals found their account in endorsing the immaculate purity of their respective religions and the sacredness of those who administered them. It was the most brutal and degraded of the English population which assaulted the pure-minded Wesley, and cock-fighting, horse-racing, drunken priests and justices established their orthodoxy to the satisfaction of so competent a constituency by reviling or indicting him. Now that it has become necessary to protest against Protestantism, it is the ignorant and unthinking who

are so eager to defend the right of private judgment by tarring and feathering all who differ with them.

It is precisely to such a constituency as this that the Third Party has appealed in the resolution we have referred to. The mass of men love an easy religion, — a religion that can wink with both its eyes when convenient; a religion that entitles its professors to a cheap and marketable kind of respectability. Puritanism has always been unpopular among them, as a system which demands too much and pays too little. In this country especially, where the clergy are entirely dependent upon the will of their hearers, the popular Christianity has shown a wonderful pliability, and has unconsciously adapted itself to the prejudices and weaknesses of its supporters. We say unconsciously, for we believe that a majority of the clergy are sincere and honest, and that they only require to have their eyes opened to become the earnest advocates of that radicalism which they now denounce as infidelity. They have very naturally glided into the belief that religion and the church are synonymous terms, and that, they being the buckler of truth and holiness upon earth, any shaft aimed at them endangers the life of the great principles of which they fancy themselves the only protection and defence. In this way Christianity,

from an eternal and self-subsisting principle, has degenerated into a kind of private estate for a certain body of men, rising and falling with their standard of excellence and purity, and instead of being the immitigable rebuker of every kind of sin, meanness, and subservience to temporal prosperity, has become a something which, if it do not excuse, at least is silent in regard to these vices of the people which are in accordance with the national standard of civilization, and which rewards with its powerful approval and benediction those easy and eternal exercises of virtue which tend to its own support and aggrandizement.

Every true abolitionist is thoroughly persuaded that the most terrible weapon which they can bring to bear, not only against slavery, but against all other social vices, is the religious sentiment of the country. But it is the *true* religious sentiment, and not that of which the churches and clergy of the land are the present exponents, which they are striving to reach; and the religious system of the country, as now existing, is the greatest obstacle in their way. Most men are desirous of some form of religion or other, and they prefer that which makes virtue most easily attainable and most profitable when attained. Those who think at all about the matter are very unwilling to be convinced that the

institution which they and their fathers have expended so much pains and zeal to rear has failed of the proposed end. They do not perceive that the church, which is merely the outward exponent of the religious sentiment, and only valuable as it represents that sentiment correctly, must of necessity undergo continual changes and modifications in order to be true to the natural advancement and elevation of that whereof it professes to be the emblem. The political and religious principles of a nation must, in order to have any useful vitality, be in advance of that nation's civilization. When they have brought the civilization of that nation up to their own higher level, they must move forward another step. In this country the civilization of the people has not yet come nearly up to the political principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence, but it has already gone beyond the religious principle as now represented by the church. It is time, then, for the church to re-form itself so as to be the emblem of something higher and purer, — of something which shall satisfy the demand of the foremost spirits of the age, — and no longer be content, by remaining fixed in a traditionary and retrospective excellence, to be the time-serving cloak and excuse for the indolent or interested who lag behind.

The surest and safest test for deciding when the time has arrived for the church to take another step forward is by observing whether it is reverenced by the wisest of its members as merely an external symbol of some former manifestation of divinity, or is reverenced as containing in itself a present and living divineness. If only the first, then it is of no more sacredness than the miter or rochet of the bishop, and they who call it profanity or atheism to assail it are either unprincipled and base, or they are themselves the best proof of the necessity of the attack. That the church is at present in this condition we shall endeavor to prove in another article.

THE CHURCH AND CLERGY AGAIN

In our paper of the twenty-seventh of February, we said a few words about the relation which the body of uncompromising abolitionists have assumed toward the American church. The subject is so extensive, and involves so many collateral issues, that we shall, in continuing the remarks which we then commenced, barely touch upon the more prominent and glaring points of the question.

At the very outset we are met with an objection which seems to possess far more of force and relevancy than a rigid examination will concede to it. We are asked how the clergy are so more chiefly and notoriously to be blamed in this matter of upholding slavery than any other portion of our social system, such, for instance, as the merchants, the lawyers, and the manufacturers. All these support slavery, as far as it is their interest to do so, and surely the church does no more. But the answer to this is plain and conclusive. If the church claimed to be nothing more than a gathering together of private citizens

on certain days of the week, then its opinions would carry no greater weight than the proceedings of a town meeting or a political caucus. In truth, as far as religion has anything to do with politics, the clergyman stands in precisely the same position as the chairman of a secular gathering. He is the mouthpiece of the opinions of the majority. He is an instrument whose sound lives upon the breath of the parishioners, and upon which their fingers can play what tune they please. Now if the church be only the frail fabric of social convenience, if it be only a part of our civilized machinery for *getting along*, surely it would be the duty of a wise man, and the irresistible impulse of an independent one, to pay no more regard to its opinions than to those of any other of the thousand shapes into which policy has divided our social organization. The resolves of a church — for the sermon of the minister upon any point which involves the political or commercial interests of the parish may be considered as merely the expression of the sentiment of that parish — should be considered of no more omnipotent efficacy for the manufacture of absolute truth than the resolves of any other meeting. If the church, then, be a machine of man's contriving, abolitionists are neither fanatics nor infidels for denying its authority in matters of conscience, or for impeaching its purity

at least as much as that of any other of the manifestations of society.

But the church claims to be, and has convinced the great majority of men that it is, of more than human origin; and whether we admit this claim to be valid or not, we have at least a right to demand of it that it shall maintain the position which it has secured for itself, or yield it to those who will better perform the functions demanded by that position. If the church be, then, the depository of truth, if its ministers have the sole charge of the conduit pipes for conveying the waters of truth to the rest of mankind, it is our duty to complain if they cast impure and poisonous matter into that blessed reservoir, or if they allow the pipes to be so clogged that only a few drops of the precious elixir can ooze through their corrupted channels.

If the church carry this divine authority with it, it should be always in advance of public opinion. It should not wait till the Washingtonians, by acting the part which, in virtue of the station it arrogates to itself, should have been its own, had driven it to sign the pledge and hold fellowship with the degraded and fallen. It should not wait until the abolitionists, by working a change in the public sentiment of the people, have convinced it that it is more politic to sympathize with the slave than with the slave-

owner, before it ventures to lisp the alphabet of anti-slavery. The glorious privilege of leading the forlorn hope of truth, of facing the desperate waves of prejudice, of making itself vile in the eyes of men by choosing the humblest means of serving the despised cause of the Master it professes to worship, all these belong to it in right of the position it has assumed.

Instead of timidly yielding to, and in many instances encouraging, the prejudices or the ignorant rage of the mob, it is the clergy themselves who should have been the victims (if any there must be) of the first wrath of assaulted sin. It is they who should have been mobbed, who should have endured insult and contumely. When they can produce certificates of their having undergone this course of medical treatment, which the world always prescribes for those who are first brainstruck by the light of truth, they will have proved their right to the title they assume of being the messengers of God upon earth. Every new revelation of God is sure to be hooted at as a piece of insanity; every early disciple of it is sure to be mobbed. The clergy have seldom seemed ambitious of this distinction.

In many parts of Germany there are legends of buried churches and convents, whose bells are often heard, and in which, now and then, some person, by

a lucky chance, can hear the monks chanting the ritual of many centuries ago. It seems to us that the religion of our churches is of very much the same subterranean and traditionary kind. To one walking in the pure light of the upper day, the sound of their service seems dim and far off, and if he catches a word here and there, it is in an obsolete language which does not appeal to the present heart and soul, but only to a vague reverence for what is ancient, a mysterious awe for what is past.

The church is, in its true sense, merely the outward symbol of the religious sentiment as that sentiment ought to be. When it becomes merely the symbol of that sentiment as it is, there is no longer any use or fitness in it, and it degrades the moral sense of the nation which it was its duty to elevate. Then it is time for all those who have some innate principle of religion, and who are therefore competent to reform it, to begin an attack upon it which shall compel it to move forward in reality to that lofty stand which it has duped men into believing that it occupies already. The religious sentiment will seek its material development in some symbol or other, and as it advances in civilization and culture, so will its symbols become worthier and purer, and so much the more readily will it throw by its old and withered ones. To many of us it seems that

the present form of the church is no more truly an emblem of divinity than is the fetich of the African, when we consider the relative moral advancement of the two nations who bow down before their respective idols. The outward form of the church is, at present, nothing but a block of wood rudely carved, which we shall cast away for some purer image, and it will not be long before we shall wonder at our benightedness in allowing it room on the earth so long. The clergy should remember that men — as well as fishes — may become not only blind, but absolutely eyeless by too long dwelling in the dark. Nature provides only such organs as our situation renders absolutely necessary; she gives no superfluity; and if men's eyes have been for a long time shut tight against the light of truth, or by their subterranean condition unable to receive it, they will at last become incapable of the office for which they were originally intended.

DANIEL WEBSTER

"Mr. Edward Webster has arrived in town for the purpose of recruiting a company of volunteers for the Mexican War. He has taken this step, we understand, with the full approval of his distinguished father." — (*Boston Papers.*)

In a world like ours, where no man can afford to throw his sympathy away, we have always lamented as wasted that which Gray lavished on the "mute, inglorious Miltons," and those other purely imaginary gentlemen whose genius was smothered by circumstances, and whom he has accordingly embalmed and buried in his country churchyard. No man ever yet had a genius for anything which he did not in one way or another contrive to show. Has not the development of genius, in spite of all the untowardness of fortune and station, become proverbial? Surely, if ever any quality of mind might have "blushed unseen," that eminent faculty of Governor Briggs for inconsistency (not that glorious inconsistency which turns from wrong to right, but that singular kind which is uneasy till it escapes from right to wrong), and for bringing himself into

disgrace with all honest men, might have done so. Yet we have seen this genius bowing the most unpromising circumstances to its will as if they had been blades of grass. No, we are well persuaded that these melancholic men and maids, who wander disconsolate through this great vineyard of God, the earth, fearing that they shall not "fulfil their destiny," as they call it, unable to find any tool to work withal which shall not harden their delicate palms, and dreading to work in God's sunlight lest they should become tanned to an uninteresting brown, are merely the transcendental wing of that huge army of locusts who live upon their neighbors, and who, to use the expressive rhyme of the country school dame, are simply afflicted with

"The fever de lurk,"

whose symptoms, as defined in the second verse of the distich, are the having

"Two stomachs to eat and nary one to work."

These æsthetic Jeremy Diddlers need be under no apprehensions. Their "destiny," as far as we can comprehend it, is to cheat society out of so many decent members; and they "fulfil" it to perfection.

Yet "*might have been*" is a melancholy phrase after all, and the saddest sight this world has to

offer is that of great faculties debased from their legitimate function, and frittered away in the base uses of the world,

"Of genius given and knowledge won in vain,"

of the eagle turned buzzard, and claiming only a bastard's inheritance in that sky where he should have soared supreme. Among the thousand and one so-called great men of this so-called democracy, Daniel Webster always excites in us the most painful feeling of regret. A man who might have done so much, and who will die without having disburthened the weary heart of Humanity of one of its devouring griefs! What has Freedom to thank Daniel Webster for? What has Peace? What has Civilization? What has that true Conservatism, which consists in bringing the earth forward and upward to the idea of its benign Maker? In one word, how is God the better served, how are heaven and earth more at one for His having bestowed upon this man that large utterance, that divine faculty of eloquent speech? How was man made in the image of God, save that the capacity was given him of being an adequate representative on earth of some one of the attributes of the Great Father, and His loyal ambassador to man?

Who that has ever witnessed the wonderful mag-

netism which Webster exerts over masses of men can doubt that his great powers have been staked against the chances of the presidential chair and lost, gambled, thrown away by the fortune of the dice? The influence of his physical presence is prodigious. He owes half his fame to it. At a late literary festival at Cambridge, when he entered, the ceremonies of the day were interrupted by a long thunder of applause, and we saw many reverend clergymen, with their faces all aglow, huzzaing a man whose private reputation can hardly be called immaculate, as if he had been the veritable prophet Daniel himself. We saw him when he defended himself in Faneuil Hall against the outraged Whiggism of Boston for having retained his seat in the Tyler cabinet, and when the thronging audience came, not as usual to witness and decorate his oration, but to sit, as it were, in judgment upon him. Many a better speech, both in the grandeur and the grace of his oratory, have we heard from Wendell Phillips, but never did we encounter a harder task than to escape the fascination of that magnificent presence of the man which worked so potently to charm the mind from a judicial serenity to an admiring enthusiasm. There he stood at bay, and that one man, with his ponderous forehead, his sharp, cliff-edged brows, his brooding thunderous eyes, his

Mirabeau mane of hair, and all those other nameless attributes of his lion-like port, seemed enough to overbalance and outweigh that great multitude of men who came as accusers, but who remained, so to speak, as captives, swayed to and fro by his aroused energy as the facile grain is turned hither and thither in mimic surges by the strong wind that runs before the thunder-gust. We have compared him to a lion, yet perhaps that lazy strength of his might better be typified by a slightly changed quotation from that language, to display his shallowness, in which he has so sophomoric a fondness. Let us liken him, then, to an angry bull, to an "Epicuri di grege" taurus.

No truly great man can find his adequate type among the animal, though men of any conceivable degree of mental power may.

It is said that great occasions summon forth great minds to be their servants and to do their work. Rather, we should say, the world is full of great occasions, but only great minds can see them, and surrender themselves unreservedly to their dictation. Such men as Washington are called providential men. And so they are; yet there were men of far greater intellectual capacity than Washington in the day of the Revolution. Washington had a great *character*, and it is in proportion as they possess

this mysterious faculty (we may call it) that men make their mark upon their age, and are valued by posterity. Herein consists the great strength of such men as Garrison, and it is precisely here that Webster is wanting. Foolish critics, and others who cannot see beyond the narrow horizon of literary effort, have defined genius to be the creative power. It is not truly what a man creates, but *what he is created* that stamps him as a genius, as one heaven-sent. The man of talent is he who has his faculties most at command, who can use them glibly to produce results — the only kind of creation granted to man. But the man of genius is *possessed* by that guardian genius of his, and is led by it, not to the downy seats of worldly prosperity and power, but into the wilderness, as it were, there to brood over his fore-reaching thoughts, to commune with his own bitter tears and racking heart struggles, till he is sent forth, baptized in fire, a prophet and reformer. Not to the easily climbed pinnacles of earthly renown, but to the difficult, lone, and melancholy summits of a clearer and broader moral vision is he led during his life.

Will God decide that the occasion has been wanting to Daniel Webster? How far might not that trumpet voice have reached, in behalf of the oppressed, from the commanding position conceded to

his powerful intellect! How many might it not have aroused who now sleep, forgetful of their duty to their fellow-man! God has given him eminent faculties, and what is the harvest? Will they who from among the crowding tares of the world glean the sparse wheat ears for God's hungry poor, be forced to pull down their barns and build greater because Daniel Webster has lived? He has made some "great" speeches in defence of the tariff. He has defended from the insults of a worthless slave trader that state which, were it indeed worthy of his eulogy, were it the old Bay State of former days, would never have suffered a cowardly governor to impeach the integrity of a noble commonwealth by issuing his proclamation in behalf of a slave-trading, murderous, and unholy war. He has won the title of "Defender of the Constitution" by his zeal in fostering the corrupt public sentiment which sets the political shifts of men above the law of nature and of God. He has settled the north-eastern boundary. He has, in accordance with that axiom of natural philosophy which declares that *ex nihilo nihil fit*, reduced Charles Jared Ingersoll to nothing by a speech in which he descended even below the vulgar level of his assailant. And finally, he has sent his youngest son (a youth who has just about brains enough to be conveniently come at by

a cannon ball) to Boston to recruit a company for the Mexican war, as if his subserviency to the slave power had not already amply atoned for his federalism in the last war, and richly earned for him the title of *patriot* as it is understood in America. Shall not the Recording Angel write *Ichabod* after the name of this man in the great book of Doom? What voice of one enfranchised man, what saving testimony of a single great truth made clearer, of a single human sorrow made lighter, shall plead for a reversal of the decree?

There was a moment when *expediency* seemed to be dragging Webster into the ranks of anti-slavery. But with expediency at the helm, no man, however mighty his powers, ever made a prosperous voyage, or dropped anchor at last in the sheltered haven of that pure fame which alone can claim

"The perfect witness of all-judging Jove."

At the time when the Texas plot was ripening towards its infamous consummation, a public meeting was called in Boston to protest against this new encroachment of the slaveholding oligarchy. It was rumored that Webster would speak at this meeting, and such was unquestionably his intention. But the great lords of commerce and manufacture held themselves aloof. They would heedfully avoid not

only the reality but even the remote suspicion of treason against Mammon. The heart of the old Bay State was so mummy-wrapped in cotton as to give no audible beat, and Webster, governed by his friends, and persuaded that his *diagnosis* from the pulse of the commonwealth was incorrect, stayed away and held his peace.

Had he gone, that one act might have saved him. The fervor, the inspiration, the glorious delirium of standing for the first time face to face with a great principle, might have snatched him away as in a fiery chariot from the narrow, conventional sphere which had enthralled him. Once more God said, Behold the occasion! and the man slunk away to be for life the defender of the "Constitution," when he might have been the champion of Freedom and of Man! Once more a vision of the president's chair hung like a cloud before his eyes, and blotted out that golden throne among the immortals which stood empty for him!

Verily, we say again, there is no sadder sentence than "*might have been.*"

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION OF 1848

WHAT may be the result of the last revolution in France we of course cannot take upon ourselves definitely to prophesy. That we have seen the last of kingship there is, we think, beyond a question. When the idea of royalty had still so much of vitality in it that it was considered necessary to chop off the head — the least valuable part — of a poor bewildered monarch, it was not an impossible thing for the Holy Alliance to make another Bourbon adhere to the throne of France with the sacred paste of legitimacy. But when a king has been, not beheaded, but (we shudder to say it) kicked, what glue can the diplomatists invent strong enough to stick him in his seat again, or another in his stead?

Louis Philippe extinguished the last sparks of loyalty in France as effectually as if that had been the one object of his eighteen years' reign. He had made monarchy contemptible. He had been a stockjobber, a family matchmaker. The French had seen their royalty gradually

> "melt,
> Thaw, and resolve itself into *a Jew*."

During a long and peaceful reign the king had in no way contrived to *grow on to* the people. He was in no sense of the word a head to them. A nation can be loyal to a man, or to the representative of an idea. Louis Philippe was neither. When all the royalty of France can be comfortably driven out of it in a street-cab, one would think the experiment of a republic might be safely ventured upon. To us the late events in Paris seem less a revolution than the quiet opening of a flower which, before it can blossom, must detrude the capsule which has hitherto enveloped and compressed it.

We have not been surprised at the coolness with which the news of the liberation of the French people has been received by many of our leading American journalists. There is in this country a large class of persons who seem to consider that the tendency of all republics is toward anarchy. They are unable to perceive that a government is secure and stable exactly in proportion as the interests of all are most clearly represented in it. They dignify with the respectable name of Conservatism a stupid adherence to the makeshift Present, and a total want of faith in, or comprehension of, the future. This hold-back kind of conservatism is as if a man should carefully place a log in the middle of a railroad track to prevent the possible catastrophe of

the train's running off before it reach the end of its journey. It providently makes sure of a smash somewhere to get rid of the chance of one somewhere else. Persons of this stamp cannot shake off the prepossession that a certain amount of sham is necessary to the well-governing of a people. They cannot perceive that the idea of government has been steadily culminating toward that point where it could best satisfy certain great desires and instincts of humanity. Their notion of government is the good old John Bull one, that it is solely an institution for the preservation of the property of those who have it, and of the bones and sinews of those who have it not, to the end that the aforesaid property may be further increased. The only New Testament doctrine of which they have an adequate conception is, that to him who hath shall be given, and from him who hath not shall be taken even that which he hath. These otherwise worthy persons are so completely behind this age that the dust of it gets in their eyes. They sympathize with Louis Philippe in his dethronement, and quite forget the sympathy due to the people he had dethroned.

For ourselves, whether the movement now begun in France fail outwardly or not, we rejoice at it. If the people are not yet ripe for it, their failure will help them to become so. We rejoice at it none the

less as the first revolution in human history at the bottom of which lies the idea of the people, of social reorganization and regeneration. The first English Revolution was a revolt of the middle classes. There were republicans among the leaders of it, and there were men who cried out for King Jesus and meant King Log; but the people were quite inadequate to self-government, and Cromwell became necessary. The only change from the old system of affairs was that a head was put at the apex of the state instead of a mask. The second English revolution was one of the aristocracy resulting in a mere change of dynasty. Our own revolution was rather a separation from Great Britain, and did not produce any striking social change. It is true that speculative minds, like Jefferson's, in advance of their time, incorporated certain radical ideas with the declaration put forth by the United Colonies. But if those ideas were enthusiastically, they were not appreciatingly, received. It is true that the farmers at Concord Bridge, as Emerson has strikingly said,

"Fired the shot heard round the world,"

but they were not conscious of the mighty effects to flow from that little touch of their fingers upon the trigger. If our people had understood their

own Declaration of Independence, the roots of slavery would never have been allowed to strike into and split asunder the very foundations of our social institutions. The first French Revolution was only the natural recoil of an oppressed and imbruted people. If the men who attempted to ride that whirlwind had been competent to the occasion, they would have looked forward, and would not have raked for a system among the ruins of ancient Rome. Popular rights have doubtless been advanced by all these great movements, and the masses have gradually been getting to be considered as something different in kind from water-power and steam, though identical with them in use. It is found that the little spark of God in them makes them uneasy under systems of legislation which might be welcomed with a self-forgetting patriotism by water-wheels and spinning-jennies. The shadow cast on the wall by the last French Revolution,

> "with fear of change
> Perplexing monarchs,"

is not that of the armed man of the old republic, but of a simple workman in his blouse. And monarchs are not the only persons perplexed by it.

People have been so long used to the idea that the cream of this world is meant for the few, and that the

sky-blue left after a second skimming, and enriched with a few rhetorical flourishes, is the appropriate portion of the many, that they cannot accustom their minds to the contemplation of any other system of partition. There would seem to be some mathematical deficiency in their mental organization which unfits them for the commonest sum in simple division, while at the same time they display great proficiency in multiplication and addition. One may laugh safely now at the divine right of kings; but it is impiety to meddle with the divine right of *institutions*, and not far short of downright atheism to question the [theological] divinity that doth hedge pauperism, slavery, and other such blotches of our self-satisfied nineteenth century. Many respectable persons are shocked at the impropriety of a government which talks face to face with the people, and (whether it be from an innate respect for laziness or not) are still more outraged that it should give them a pledge of work. And for a provisional government to promise the people provisions! To us there is something unspeakably touching in the spectacle of a mob (as they are called) of successful insurgents satisfied with the hope of work. Is there no advance here? Is not this cry for work better than the old *panem et circenses?* But then the Fourierites are at the bottom

of it. If so, we say, God bless them! For this is the first revolution we ever read of in which the larger share of the blood shed has flowed from the veins of the conqueror. No doubt Charles Fourier was a terrible man. He had other things underneath his skull than *dura* and *pia maters*. There were great ideas throbbing there, and, if these ideas have worked their way downward to the masses, so much the better. In that case we look upon the success of the revolution as certain, for we have no dread of anarchy among a people in whom ideas have taken the place of instincts.

And indeed it is exactly here that our chief confidence centres. Not only are the French a scientific people, and therefore the better capable of appreciating order and system, but they are also an eminently receptive people, swift to appreciate and assimilate an idea. In this respect they are the reverse of the English race, which clings tenaciously to an idea already received, but is very slow to accept any new one. Moreover, the French have always shown a fluency in adapting themselves to circumstances, such as no other nation has ever exhibited. Hence the success of their missionaries. But why look about us for ground of hope and confidence? We, who believe not in a dead but in a living God, not in a God who has ended His work, who has

done with His world, and set it adrift to seethe and simmer, and at last to crystallize into such shape as it may, but in one who still moves and works in the midst of us, and uses us to forward His harmonious design, need no other source of trust and security.

SHALL WE EVER BE REPUBLICAN?

VOLTAIRE said that the English went mad once in seven years; that is, the electors among them. It was one of their constitutional guarantees. This privilege of losing their heads septennially was a concession which they obtained either by taking off that of the first Charles, or by the revolution which resulted from the second James's never having had any. We, who have improved upon the British system in so many important particulars, have not neglected one so important as this. Not only are we allowed to indulge ourselves in this luxury as American citizens, at proper and not too infrequent intervals, but, as inhabitants of particular states and cities, or as members of yet more minutely subdivided corporations, we are enabled to render its blessings perennial. Conservative minds who consider it necessary that God and nature should be assisted here, checked there, and generally modified by the wiser counsels of property, esteem this as the great safeguard of our institutions. Their theory,

though not precisely so stated, amounts to this — that the minds of the people must be kept constantly employed about the shadows of power to prevent their hands from grasping at the substance, and to neutralize the activity of that organ of destructiveness which includes more or less of the brain in proportion as the pocket is emptier or fuller. The balances of commonwealths can only be kept even by throwing the dust of them into the eyes of the masses. It is truly ludicrous to see the importance which the American people attach to the getting one or the other shell of a presidential election. They seem to consider that they have nothing to do with the oyster.

Under the modern forms of monarchical government, it has been found that, provided the stomachs of the people are filled to the point of a certain ascertained *minimum*, the residue may be profitably stuffed with sham. With us, plenty has hitherto precluded the necessity of employing this economical esculent, except for the purpose of habituating the system to its use in advance. The experiment here seems to be to discover how far the old style of government can get along if it be called by another name. As much complication of machinery as possible is interposed between the will of the people and the objects it may be desirous to exercise itself upon. Brother

Jonathan was a great deal too shrewd to take the pills of despotism from the hand of the regular practitioners, but will swallow them by the handful if prescribed by quacks. Political theorists tell us that the people are led by their interests, by the passion of the moment, by their prejudices, and what not; but in point of fact they have never been led in any other than the good old-fashioned method, namely — by their noses. Despotisms attain their ends by grinding the faces of their subjects. All that apparently restrains us from the same practice seems to be that it would endanger a feature so useful in the administration of affairs. Nevertheless, we get along tolerably well. We have got a very pretty war, a respectable standing army, and a very long bill to pay.

However it may have been in theory, it has never become practically understood that governments are intended solely for the advantage of the many. What difference does it make whether an aspirant for office cringe to a president or a king, whether he bribe the mistress of some anointed majesty with gold, or the sovereign people with fawning and sophistry? As far as our national government is concerned, we do not deserve the name of a free people. Whenever there has been the least danger of its expressing the great idea which nominally underlies our institutions, slavery has put her bloody hand over its mouth. She

has gone on from usurpation to usurpation, till we have forgotten that we ever intended to be free. She has taught us to cringe and palter and equivocate. She has been the source of every political evil that has befallen us. She has not allowed us a single statesman, but hordes of shufflers and trimmers. Is it not a degrading fact that a man's being *known* is enough to prevent his having any hope of the presidency? The two great parties are equally corrupt. They would vote for the devil — provided he were a slaveholder. It is because slavery has made our great intellects blind that we are ruled by our little ones. Men in prominent positions are obliged to wink at so many things that they at last come to the conclusion that it saves time to keep their eyes shut altogether. We produce great speakers by the score, but never a great doer — except of mischief.

This state of things has not been the fault of the people, but of their teachers. Men have found it easier to govern them by tradition than by truth. They have been instructed to consider allegiance to a piece of striped bunting of deeper import than loyalty to Truth herself. Demagogues care not how muddy the stream which floats them into office, even though it be turbid with blood. The people, meanwhile, go on laying the golden eggs, but will by and by discover that they are geese for doing it.

People talk a great deal of the tyranny of Public Opinion. It is not this we groan under, but rather the public *want of Opinion*. The majority of our statesmen have no opinions on any subject whatever. They have prospective opinions, contingent opinions, opinions subject to the decision of national conventions, opinions on both sides of any matter, opinions that they are very fit persons for the presidency, but as to true, definite opinions, by which we mean sincere results of judgment based on the consideration of absolute right, they have them not. Instead of trying to form and direct public sentiment, they simply endeavor to find out what it is and to pamper it. Possibly they think that, as two negatives make an affirmative, the adding together of their own want of principle and the people's want of intelligence may produce an enlightened honesty. So accustomed are the masses to this state of things, that they will give their votes much more readily for a man who proclaims himself the disciple of somebody else, than for one who is his own master. Jefferson and Jackson still rule us from their urns, and we are governed more by the dead past than by a regard to the present or future.

The condition into which affairs have gradually sunk is astounding. Our government is as absolutely a distinct thing from the people as that of

Nicholas. If it were otherwise, would such a debate as the recent one in Congress on the French sympathy resolves have been possible? We believe that the genuine instincts of the people would sympathize heartily with the abolition of slavery in the French Colonies, if they were only allowed a chance to express themselves. A noble sentiment will always carry the field against a mean one if fair play be maintained. We have institutions for teaching the Blind and the Deaf Mutes the management of their faculties, but are more sadly in need of one to give our Northern Representatives lessons in the use of their backbones. There is scarce a half dozen of them who know how to stand tolerably upright.

The truth is that we have never been more than nominal republicans. We have never got over a certain shamefacedness at the disrespectability of our position. We feel as if when we espoused Liberty we had contracted a *mésalliance*. The criticism of the traveller who looks at us from a monarchical point of view exasperates us. Instead of minding our own business we have been pitifully anxious as to what would be thought of us in Europe. We have had Europe in our minds fifty times, when we have had God and Conscience once. Our literature has endeavored to convince Europeans that we are as like them as circumstances would admit. The men who

have the highest and boldest bearing among us are the slaveholders. We are anxious to be acknowledged as one of the great Powers of Christendom, forgetful that all the fleets and navies in the world are weak in comparison with one sentence in the Declaration of Independence. When every other argument in favor of our infamous Mexican war had been exhausted, there was this still left — that it would make us more respected abroad. We are afraid of our own principles as a raw recruit of his musket. As far as the outward machinery of our government is concerned, we are democratic only in our predilection for little men.

When will man learn that the only true conservatism lies in growth and progress, that whatever has ceased growing has begun to die? It is not the conservative, but the retarding element which resides in the pocket. It is droll to witness the fate of this conservatism when the ship of any state goes to pieces. It lashes itself firmly to the ponderous anchor it has provided for such an emergency, cuts all loose, and — goes to the bottom. There are a great many things to be done in this country, but the first is the abolition of slavery. If it were not so arrant a sin as it is, we should abolish it (if for no other reason) than that it accustoms our public men to being cowards. We are astonished, under the pre-

sent system, when a Northern representative gets so far as to surmise that his soul is his own, and make a hero of him forthwith. But we shall never have that inward fortunateness, without which all outward prosperity is a cheat and delusion, till we have torn up this deadly Upas, no matter with what dear or sacred things its pestilential roots may be entwined.

PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

The only thing we can conceive of which could prevent any given individual from becoming President of the United States would be his purchasing a copy of The Complete Letterwriter, and devoting himself to an enthusiastic course of epistolary composition. In one after another of the presidential candidates this epidemic displays itself, and finally becomes fatal. As it is not so much the fashion in America as in France to elevate men of letters to public office, we find it hard to account for the foolhardiness with which the risk of this contagion is encountered. General Harrison, it is understood, was surrounded with the *cordon sanitaire* of a committee. No prisoner in Spielberg was ever more cautiously deprived of the use of writing materials. The soot was carefully scraped from the chimney-flues; outposts of expert rifle-shooters rendered it certain death for any goose (who came clad in feathers) to approach within a certain specified distance of North Bend; and all the domestic fowls about the establishment were reduced to the condi-

tion of Plato's original man. By these energetic precautions the General was saved. At the next election Mr. Clay and Mr. Van Buren each contrived to make for himself a political winding-sheet out of a single sheet of medium foolscap.

During the present canvass Mr. Clay, like Mantalini, has committed suicide for the second time, General Scott has managed to drown himself in so shallow a thing as a hasty plate of soup, and General Taylor is in a fair way to dispatch himself by proving conclusively that his dispatches were done by somebody else. Mr. Hale, a man of strong common-sense, though provided with writing materials *gratis*, has exercised hitherto an exalted self-denial. We have seen but two letters of Mr. Gerritt Smith's which might be supposed to bear upon his expected nomination for the presidency. Both of them did quite too much honor to his head and heart to insure him more than a very limited vote. It seems to be generally granted that it is important for the American People to know as little as possible about their proposed candidate, and that the only feasible plan for them is to buy another pig in a Polk.

The title of General appears to be the first condition of availability. To acquire this crowning merit Messrs. Caleb Cushing and Franklin Pierce devoted themselves to an arduous apprenticeship in Mexico.

The claims of General Tom Thumb, we understand, are strongly urged in some quarters. Indeed, to have had any connection, however remote, with military affairs, establishes a right to considerable influence in settling the question of the candidacy. General Taylor's charger formed a conspicuous element in the procession at New Orleans, and, as Heliogabalus raised his horse to the consulship, "Old Whitey," if not a candidate himself, may pay off the debt of gratitude incurred by his race by assisting his master to the presidential chair.

General Taylor's claims may be very shortly summed up. He is a general, a slaveholder, and nobody knows what his opinions are. There is a good deal of strength in these qualifications, no doubt. As to his having employed bloodhounds in the Florida War, we think he displayed both wisdom and humanity, for it was a service much better suited to bloodhounds than to men. To those who raise objections on the score of his slaveholding, it is answered that he is a mild one, and that he was born and bred to it. Should it ever unhappily chance that any of his partisans find themselves in the larder of his Majesty of the Cannibal Islands, they will have the satisfaction of knowing that they will be chewed mildly, with a due regard for the claims of humanity, and by a person born and bred

to the occupation. Mr. Abbott Lawrence has discovered striking traits of similarity between General Taylor and General Washington. But Mr. L. is a candidate for the vice-presidency, and of course it would be expected that the bobs should express a high opinion of the kite which is to carry them up. There is one point of resemblance, unquestionably. The title of General belongs equally to both. But then Caleb Cushing is a general, too, — not to mention Gideon J. Pillow.

Mr. Clay was formerly an available candidate by reason of his being the embodiment of the great American principle of compromise. This new method of parting the goats upon the left hand and the sheep upon the right was to strike an apparently even balance between them, and make it as comfortable to the goats as possible by contriving to have the largest and best pasture on the left side. But latterly it has been found inconvenient to make even a compromise between right and wrong. The goats have broken through the fence, driven the sheep quite out, and established matters to suit themselves. Consequently, we require a Tityrus adapted to the new order of things.

Mr. Woodbury has been spoken of as having a chance for the nomination of the Democratic Party; but Mr. Charles Gag Atherton possesses so much

larger claims, based on the same kind of merit, that it would be hardly fair to overlook him. However, among the great crowd of applicants, his being so *very* small might lead to that result. General Cass also has been several times mentioned (by himself) as an eligible person. It is a proverb, at least as old as Montaigne, that the world is inclined to take people at their own valuation. In this case General Cass would be an economical candidate to any party, as he has commonly offered himself very low indeed.

The Massachusetts Whigs have brought forward Mr. Webster. Had the great defender of the Constitution been endowed with a heart in any adequate proportion to his head, he would have been President before this. Men admire boldness even on the wrong side. It is this feeling that has given to Mr. Calhoun two thirds of his reputation for ability. But men, sooner or later, learn to reverence courage on the side of right. Still better, they learn to trust in it. The posthumous honors paid to John Quincy Adams should give a lesson to our statesmen. The very people whom, for their own sake, he had braved proclaimed his ashes sacred. The people would be glad of a great man if they could get him. Where all are shams, they choose the biggest as the most meritorious. If they cannot

have something perfect, they would fain have something as perfect in its kind as possible.

That Mr. Webster has a great intellect it would be folly to deny. But the crisis demands, not so much a maker of great speeches, as a doer of great deeds. Mr. Webster, it is true, has laid claim to the Wilmot proviso as "his thunder," and, if we have come to that pass that it is a merit in a man to be opposed to the establishment of slavery in new territory, we are quite willing to concede his claim. In his recent speech on the Mexican War we do not remember that he made any allusion to his thunder, except in saying that his opposition to new territory was not a "*sentimental* one," — a phrase borrowed of Mr. Caleb Cushing, and of sufficiently notorious meaning. Mr. Cushing was paid for it by being deported to China. We confess that Mr. Webster's thunder seems to us very much of the same quality as that of Salmoneus in the old Greek fable. We fancy that if his pitch and tow thunderbolt were to be suddenly changed to the genuine article in his hands, no one would drop it more expeditiously than himself. Mr. W. is a great speaker, and has had occasions enough offered him to utter himself on the side of right, yet he has maintained a longer than Pythagorean silence.

But there is little profit in discussing the relative

merits of different candidates. The successful one will probably be somebody of whom no one ever heard before, and whom no one will wish to hear of again. As long as the people continue absorbed in those two great ends of a rational being, getting and keeping, it will matter very little to the cause of humanity and right who shall become tenant of the White House. There is, at least, a little malicious satisfaction in the thought that none of our great men, who have earned that title by great sacrifices of principle to themselves, have any chance whatever. Let us recommend to the study of all such the following extract from John Wesley's journal, detailing a conversation between himself and a Chickasaw Indian. Wesley asks him, "How came your nation by the knowledge they have?" The answer of the savage is: "As soon as ever the ground was sound and fit to stand upon, it came to us, and has been with us ever since. But we are young men; our old men know more; but all of them do not know. There are but a few whom the Beloved One chooses from childhood, and is in them, and takes care of them, and teaches them. They know these things, *and our old men practise, therefore they know; but I do not practise, therefore I know little.*"

This kind of knowledge which arises from the

open and frank practice of justice, honor, and right, may be recommended as a safe prescription for statesmen generally, and for our own in particular. Certificates of its efficacy may be obtained from the French Provisional Government.

AN IMAGINARY CONVERSATION

Mr. Calhoun. Mr. Foote. Gen. Cass.

MR. CALHOUN

These recent disgraceful outrages in the District of Columbia strike a heavy blow at rational liberty all over the world. Who will credit that property (the cement which binds together all modern political fabrics) can be secure under republican institutions, when it is thus rudely invaded within the very jurisdiction of our highest legislative assembly?

MR. FOOTE

It is a sentiment of the Bible, I believe, that riches have the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth. But the South labors under this greater misfortune, that her property is endowed with legs and a kind of brute instinct (understanding I will not call it) to use them in a northerly direction. It is a crowning mercy that God has taken away the wings from our wealth. The elder patriarchs were doubtless deemed un-

worthy of this providential interference. It was reserved for Christians and Democrats. The legs we can generally manage, but it would have been inconvenient to be continually clipping the wings, not to mention possible damage to the stock. For these and other comforts make us duly thankful!

MR. CASS

My Friend Louis Philippe — ah, I had forgotten; I should have said my late friend —

MR. CALHOUN

The unfortunate are never the friends of the wise man.

MR. CASS

I was about to say that the Count de Neuilly has often remarked to me that we were fortunate in having so conservative an element as "persons held to service or labor" (I believe I do not venture beyond safe Constitutional ground), mingled in a just proportion with our otherwise too rapidly progressive institutions. There is no duty of a good statesman, he said, at once so difficult and so necessary as that of keeping steadily behind his age. But, however much satisfaction a sound politician who adheres to this theory may reap in the purity of his own Conscience, he will find that the dust incident to such a position will sometimes so choke him as to prevent his giving an intelligible answer to the

often perplexing questions of his Constituents. Yet I know not whether in such exigencies a cough be not the safest, as it is the readiest, reply. It is an oracle susceptible of any retrospective interpretation.

MR. CALHOUN

A politician who renders himself intelligible has put a rope round his own neck, and it would be strange indeed if his opponents should be unable to find a suitable tree. The present Revolutionary Government of France have taken many long strides toward the edge of that precipice which overhangs social and political chaos, but none longer than in bringing government face to face with the people. That government is the most stable which is the most complicated and the most expensive. Men admire most what they do not understand, and cling tightest to what they have paid, or are paying, most for. They love to see money spent liberally by other people, and have no idea that every time Uncle Sam unbuttons his pocket he has previously put his hand into their own. I have great fears for France. The Provisional Government talks too much and too well, — above all it talks too clearly. In that wild enthusiasm generated by the turmoil of great and sudden social changes, and by contact with the magnetism of excited masses of men, senti-

ments are often uttered which, however striking and beautiful they might be if their application were restricted to the Utopias of poetry, are dangerous in their tendencies and results if once brought into contact with the realities of life. Despotisms profited more than the Catholic Church by shutting up Christ in the sepulchre of a dead language. A prudent and far-seeing man will confine his more inspired thoughts to the solitude of his closet. If once let loose, it is impossible to recall these winged messengers to the safer perch of his finger. He may keep an aviary of angels if he will, but he must be careful not to leave the door open. They have an unaccountable predilection for entering the hut of the slave and for seating themselves beside the hearth of the laborer. Mr. Jefferson, by embodying some hasty expressions in the Declaration of Independence, introduced explosive matter into our system.

MR. FOOTE

Yet Mr. Jefferson knew how to divorce the theoretic from the practical. If he threw firebrands, it was not in the direction of his own house. Indeed, he commonly used them, as a prudent man ought, to keep his own pot a-boiling. His words elevated him to the presidency; his works, in any community less patriarchally organized than that in which

it was his good fortune to dwell, would have elevated him to the gallows. If, for the sake of appearances, he declaimed against our wisest and most cherished institution, he was neither so thriftless nor so inhuman as to turn the Ishmaels he had begotten into the desert. He was a prudent and economical farmer of all the qualities of his nature. If he made his organ of language profitable to him as a politician, he no less enriched his pocket as a private citizen by his philoprogenitiveness.

MR. CALHOUN

Mr. Jefferson, like all theorists, was a dangerous man. Hesiod might have taught him that in uttering political axioms, the half is better than the whole. Concessions to the vague instincts of the populace are always unsafe; if made in advance, they are insane. Words are the paper-currency of statesmen, but to inspire confidence they must be supposed to rest on a specie-basis of deeds. Panics are continually arising to create a run upon the banks, and at such a crisis they are safest who have the least of the representative currency in circulation.

MR. CASS

Mr. Jefferson may have been a dangerous man, yet we owe him a large debt of gratitude. His paper money, as you call it, has enabled us hitherto

to purchase the votes of the Northern Democracy and to keep the reins of government in our own hands. As yet but a very small fraction of the Democratic Party in the free states is demanding specie. I have generally found brass to answer tolerably well as a metallic basis.

MR. FOOTE

Yet even that small fraction is enough to produce serious inconvenience. The license permitted to public meetings at the North is of a very demoralizing tendency. If hordes of work-people are allowed to gather together and express their ignorant sympathy with armed resistance to legitimate authority in France, Germany, and Ireland, will an imaginary barrier, like Mason and Dixon's line, suffice to prevent the spread of their contaminating insubordination? May not their sympathies take a wider (I should say a narrower) range?

MR. CALHOUN

I have no fear of it at present. If, as moralists tell us, the instinct of looking up be innate in the human mind, the desire of having something to look down upon is no less so. The Northern operatives are quite willing to have everybody brought down to their own level, but they would think twice before stretching a hand to lift any one up to it. The contempt for the negro in the Free States saves

us the expense of many handcuffs at the South. As long as men can talk freely, they are the less disposed to think deliberately and to reason soundly. Could some new Pythagoras impose a seven years' silence on our reformers, I should tremble as the eighth year drew nigh. As long as we have peace and surplus land, we are safe. Remove the disturbing element of hunger, and the great masses of men do not remain long in solution. They crystallize rapidly and firmly into the old forms. Allow a people to talk about their wrongs freely, and they are no longer immediately dangerous. They instantly split into factions and quarrel as to the fitting remedy. The private animosities of reformers are the bulwarks of existing abuses. The Communist unites with the Abolitionist to destroy the Fourierist, and with the Fourierist to put down the Abolitionist. Each faction, also, possesses a polypus faculty of producing antagonizing influences. Even a dispute about Phonography will divert them for a week or two from saving the world.

MR. FOOTE

Yet such exhibitions of fanaticism as the one we have recently witnessed are disorganizing. Whatever assails the permanence of any species of property turns investments into securer channels. The pocket is the only barometer for the statesman.

Many of the negroes lately kidnapped were the property of persons with very limited means, in some cases of the widow and the orphan. The gentleman on whose religious instructions I attend very properly asked in his last Sunday's discourse if these incendiaries had forgotten the vengeance denounced by the Founder of our holy religion against the spoilers of the widow and the fatherless. One girl, I happened to know, belonged to a poor and pious widow of this city. The wench was nearly white, and of a figure approaching in beauty to Powers's Greek Captive, though more voluptuous in its proportions. Her mistress had lately refused fifteen hundred dollars for her. I assure you she was well worth that and more, but this noble woman refused it. She denied herself the many luxuries which the money might have procured, in the hope of bequeathing her as a widow's mite to the Methodist Episcopal Church South. What punishment is severe enough for monsters who would cross the path of piety such as this?

MR. CASS

If a Northern man who sincerely regrets the misfortune of his birth may be allowed to express any opinion on a matter of this delicacy, I should be inclined to say that the late unhappy outrage itself (unhappy, I mean, in its intention, for the kid-

nappers were providentially balked in their nefarious design) was of less deleterious consequence than the debate which arose from it. Though the fanatics in both houses deserved all and more than all the polished denunciation which the senator from Mississippi and other gentlemen launched against them, yet I am one of those who think that punishments should be as private as possible. If one of your female servants should break a coffee-cup, you would not apply the corrective of the cart-whip (however proper it be in itself) before the windows of your drawing-room and within sight of a Northern guest.

MR. FOOTE

We would chastise the jade in Faneuil Hall if we thought proper. Did the blood of my ancestors water every field of their country's glory, from Bunker's Hill to — to — to Buena Vista, for nothing? Is our noble Constitution a piece of waste-paper?

MR. CASS

No doubt every high-minded Southern gentleman would do what was becoming a freeman under the circumstances; and in the present instance I would pardon much to the natural indignation aroused by unprovoked and unparalleled outrage. Yet I question whether the noses of Northern constituencies

are not beginning to redden under the vicarious tweakings they have so long received through their waxen representatives here, as Virgil, you remember, supposes of Daphnis. They may be infected with a squeamish desire to send hither men with more sensitive features. For the sake of the Union, the whole of whose common blessings you have a just title to enjoy by yourselves, but a portion of which you have nevertheless generously extended in time past to such unworthy individuals as myself, I should deplore such a contingency. It would be a misfortune never to be remedied should the few remaining bonds of enlightened sympathy between the opposing sections of our beloved country, the common mother and sustainer of us all, be rasped off in the unguardedness of angry debate.

MR. CALHOUN

You forget that you are not in the Senate. There never were any natural bonds, and there remain only the ragged stumps of those artificial ligatures contrived by the framers of our policy. These grate sorely together at every jar of our system, and may well be spared. Two perfectly plane and polished surfaces adhere firmly together, while two rough ones fall asunder of their own weight unless one be kept carefully atop of the other. We have succeeded hitherto in keeping the South in this relation to

the North. You at the North are so far enough advanced in Democracy as to have extinguished the race of haughty and high-spirited gentlemen; you have not yet advanced far enough to produce a race of self-centred and magnanimous men. You have many Cleons, but no Pericles. After all, a thread of cotton is strong enough to hold us together. I was in favor of a Tariff until Northern cotton manufactories should be well established. It is they that have set us in the saddle, booted and spurred us, and put a whip in our hands. I am now in favor of free trade just so far as will keep our Northern hackney quiet in the harness. We must not give him too much oats. But he has worn blinders so long that his sight is weakened, and sheers from a bushel of corn.

MR. CASS

I am inclined to agree with Mr. Douglass that the tone of the late debates will tend to excite abolition feeling at the North. It is already too widely prevalent.

MR. FOOTE

I have often been assured by Northern gentlemen, on whose intelligence I can rely, that the more respectable classes in the Free States are entirely sound on this point. Men of ability, desirous of lending their services to their country in the way of public office, are obliged to make concessions and to give

pledges, but the feeling among the influential order is healthy.

MR. CALHOUN

Pledges of this kind give me no anxiety. They are the most perishable of commodities, and no prudent office would insure a cargo of them for so long a voyage as to Washington. Our safety is in the indifference of the laboring class. It is time now that the growth of manufactories in the free states should be checked. Just as soon as the operative class becomes overcrowded springs up the fatal question of the rights of labor and the duties of capital. Public sentiment grows upward and not downward. The whirlpool is narrower and swifter toward the bottom. Hitherto capital has had no duties except to itself, and it hardly seems more unnatural that it should own the laborer outright, than that it should buy the use of him at the cheapest rate. If labor may come into the market, why not the laborer himself? While political economists are buzzing about the divine relations of demand and supply, a feeling is ripening underneath which will reduce the whole question to one of angry and irrepressible demand. When Hunger and Ignorance begin to reason together, they talk in a language which your respectable classes do not understand and cannot reply to. *Why are we here?* they asked in France, and the

throne of the most respectable monarch in Europe crumbled beneath him. Shakespeare has compared the stomach to a clock, and it is on the dial of such a clock that the last hour of slavery is numbered.

MR. FOOTE

It is a pity that there is no censorship of the press at the North. We have not only that, but an entire control of the Post Office also.

MR. CASS

The knowing on which side their bread is buttered, which, so far as I can perceive, is the only kind of knowledge possessed by the majority of editors, exercises a stricter censorship than that of Nicholas.

MR. FOOTE

I took occasion in the debate to express a desire for the dissolution of the Union. It is always well to remind the North of the prosperity we should enjoy without her. By making alliances offensive and defensive with England and France — hem! I had forgotten, — but no matter, dissolution under any circumstances would be preferable to these infidel assaults on our property and rights. Is it possible that we live in a Christian land, and in the nineteenth century? For a less outrage than the recent attempt at kidnapping, we chastised Tripoli in 18—, I do not remember the precise date. The Tripolitans

— or was it the Tunisians? — had possessed themselves of a few sailors, the color of whose skins made them comparatively valueless in a mercantile point of view. I have always questioned the expediency of our interference in that matter. Striking at the right of enslaving captives strikes at the legal fiction on which slavery is based.

MR. CALHOUN

The subject of dissolution is one upon which it is hardly safe to venture too far. Thin ice near the shore will sustain us, but gives way at a step farther out and over deeper water. In a fearfully short time from the period of rupture, the South would be a Black Republic. We should be obliged to strain the cord so tightly that it would snap. At present the piety and respectability of the North is the wet blanket which keeps our roof from taking fire. Remove that, and how long should we be safe under the shower of sparks from all parts of the civilized world? An alliance with France now would be out of the question. An alliance with England will soon be so. At present there is a natural sympathy between her and the South. We are the two purest aristocracies on the face of the earth. But in ten years England must be freer than we are now, or she will be only a heap of smoking and chaotic fragments. Observe how her journals exult because

150,000 shopkeepers were frightened into special constables by being made to believe that Chartism meant universal breaking of plate-glass and pillage. The middle class of England is her most dangerous population. Were I an English aristocrat, it would be the ignorance of this class that I should fear. Their brains have fattened with prosperity. It is the unyieldingness of the stratum next above the lowest which ensures violence to the explosion. It is to the movements of the Chartists that I look for an augury of the future. It is the fasting operative in his lonely and arid desert who is possessed with the unconscious spirit of prophecy. It is he who has his visions and Sinais and tables of a new law. What will all the cold water which the middle class can throw with their little fire-engine avail against the outbreak of a volcano?

MR. CASS

It becomes our unfortunate necessity to assume an appearance of sympathy with these wretched movements abroad, in order to divert attention from what might seem to the disordered vision of a false sentimentality to demand our sympathy at home. I will not speak of the ties engendered by manufactories, for I own no stock. But, in my opinion, it is on the religious sentiment of the North that your cherished domestic institution rests most secure.

MR. CALHOUN

Yes. Men will never give up Revelation, least of all those parts of it which flatter their prejudices and excuse their derelictions of duty. Piety is as cheap as irreligion and vastly more profitable. In a more simple age, we might have procured a revelation exactly suited to our circumstances and wants, as our friend Mr. Foote says in his graces before meat. The printing-press has destroyed all hope of another Mahomet. Since it is too late in the day for that we must make the most of such as we have. The fanatics, it is true, bring the New Testament against us. But it is with revelations as with wine, the older is the better, if kept in a dark place, and a few cobwebs about it do no harm. The unfilial Ham is a tower of strength to us. There is no easier way of making people self-satisfied in the injustices they are guilty of, than to assure them that they are fulfilling the prophecies.

MR. CASS

A text in the Old Testament is worth more than all the violence which was exhibited in both houses of Congress. It is inexpensive also. There is a Society (of which I am a member) which distributes the Good Book *gratis*, and we see to it that it is moderately and judiciously expounded.

MR. CALHOUN

The violence you allude to was not without its useful results. I never act without an object, or at least I have persuaded people that I do not, which is the same thing. On this occasion I had an end in view, and I gained it. I was violent just in proportion as I saw hope of concession from the other side. Mr. John P. Hale's acknowledgment, that he thought the act of the three kidnappers now in jail a wrong one, gained us vastly more than we could lose by any amount of angry declamation.

MR. FOOTE

I cannot help thinking of the poor widow and her intended thank-offering. My heart bleeds for her.

THE SACRED PARASOL

Father John de Plano Carpini, who some six hundred years ago travelled among the Tartars, has, with much that is interesting and authentic, left us some stories which call to mind such as Herodotus is accustomed to begin with an "*As they say.*" Among other things, he relates that "in the land of Kergis the people dwell under ground, because, as they say, they cannot endure a horrible noise which the sun makes at his rising." In this country we have fully as great a horror of the sun as our Kergisian prototypes, and, though we find it inconvenient to live under ground, we contrive to be thoroughly subterranean in our modes of thought. As we manage everything by conventions, we get together and resolve that the sun has not arisen, and so settle the matter, as far as we are concerned, definitively. Meanwhile the sun of a new political truth got quietly above the horizon in our Declaration of Independence. Watchers upon the mountain tops had caught sight of a ray now and then before, but this was the first time that the heavenly

light-bringer had gained an objective existence in the eyes of an entire people.

This was all very well at first, and as long as the only result was a genial warmth confined to proper persons and to fitting occasions, there was no room for any objection. But by and by the unprincipled beams began to penetrate into those dark places which it was the interest of certain persons to *keep* dark, and inquisitive people overlooking, it may be, very palpable motes in their own eyes, made discovery and proclamation of whole forests of timber in those of their neighbors. Fears in regard to *heliolites* became now very common, and a parasol of some kind was found necessary as a protection against this celestial bombardment. A stout machine of parchment was accordingly constructed, and, under the respectable name of a Constitution, was interposed wherever there seemed to be danger from the hostile incursions of light. Whenever this is spread, a dim twilight — more perplexing than absolute darkness — reigns everywhere beneath its shadow. Do any of those sacred birds which, after the Roman fashion, are fed and lodged at the public expense in the Capitol, begin to raise a note of forewarning, this wonderful implement is at once opened over their heads, and they settle into a contented silence and sleep, deceived by the fictitious night.

This holy instrument is looked upon very much as the Ark of the Covenant by the Jews. Certain select officers are appointed for its protection, and these have the privilege of opening and shutting it at will. As corruption will creep into all irresponsible bodies, so it has been rumored that our Levites have made several incursions into the gardens and poultry-yards of their neighbors under the shadow of their precious charge. However, the fault found with them is in an inverse ratio to the success of their predatory expeditions, and a chicken or an apple bestowed in the right quarter is ordinarily sufficient to secure silence, if not applause. Not only is this fortunate invention available for defence, but a thrust made with it is often found effective. The parchment of which it is constructed is moreover covered with certain hagiographies or sacred scriptures, written, as it would seem, in a universal language, since they are capable of any interpretation, — but particularly of such as is least expected and least in accordance with the apparent meaning. It must be, however unwillingly, confessed that, in those little excursions for plunder above mentioned, rents have here and there been made in this our antiphotistic protector through which minds of a fanatic temperament and of unbridled desires begin to get glimpses of blue sky beyond.

It is amazing what importance anything, however simple, gains by being elevated into a symbol. Mahomet's green breeches were doubtless in themselves common things enough, and would perhaps have found an indifferent market in Brattle or Chatham Street. They might have hung stretched upon a pole at the door of one of those second-hand repositories without ever finding a customer or exciting any feeling but of wonder at the uncouthness of their cut. But lengthen the pole a little, and so raise the cast-off garment into a banner and symbol, and it becomes at once full of inspiration, and perhaps makes a Moslem General Taylor of the very tailor who cut and stitched it and had tossed it over carelessly a hundred times. So it is with the savage and his fetich. He hacks a log into something hideous, calls it a god, and it straightway becomes invested with supernatural qualities to him, — not precisely in itself, but as the symbol of something indefinite and unseen. In the same way this contrivance of ours, though the work of our own hands, has acquired a superstitious potency in our eyes. The vitality of the state has been transferred from the citizens to this. Were a sacrilegious assault made upon it, our whole body politic would collapse at once. Gradually men are beginning to believe that, like the famous *ancile* at Rome, it fell down from

heaven, and it is possible that it may have been brought thence by a distinguished personage who once made the descent. Meanwhile our Goddess of Liberty is never allowed to go abroad without the holy parasol over her head to prevent her from being tanned, since any darkening of complexion might be productive of serious inconvenience in the neighborhood of the Capitol.

It is curious to notice how the relations of things are shifted under the shadow of this miraculous parchment. For example, the stealing of negroes from the coast of Africa for purposes of profit, though to the unsophisticated mind it might seem to have some objectionable features, is not stealing, but a laudable mercantile enterprise. On the other hand, to carry negroes away from the District of Columbia in order to set them free is a crime which goes somewhere beyond sacrilege into the region of we know not what atrocity. It is true that popular prejudice has procured the passage of a law declaring the former exploit piracy, but this only goes to show the ignorance of the vulgar, and the wide difference between sacred and profane views of the same subject. Indeed, what would be the use of having any sacred and inspired ideas at all if they were not preposterously the reverse of those commonly entertained? Sitting under the shelter of the Consti-

tution, successive presidents have pardoned every single person convicted of bringing slaves from the coast of Africa, while, by a proper interpretation of the sacred writings, those suspected of the other offence are obliged to give bail to such an amount as prevents all escape.

All Europe at this moment exhibits the disastrous consequences arising from the want of some such safeguard as that we have been describing. Light has broken in at several points, and a series of explosions has been the consequence. It is said that the Europeans are only following in our own track. If this be so, it merely adds another illustration of the fact that a good example is worse than thrown away upon the ignorant and degraded, who pervert it by a base application. While we are steadily advancing, they have gone backward. While we, the legitimate successors of the chosen people, are piously and scripturally extending the institution of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob over regions hitherto unblessed with this highest refinement of civilization, France, with a malicious exultation, is endeavoring to reduce her happy colonies to her own degraded level. The truth is that adequate ideas of freedom can never coexist with any but the Anglo-Saxon race. We are the last remnant of that wonderful people. Let us endeavor to act worthily of our lofty destiny. Cuba

can yet be rescued from the machinations of foreign despots.

Above all things we should bear in mind, and be heedful to impress it upon the generation that is to follow us, that there is nothing so dangerous as the light of what is called the sun of righteousness. Not only are those who are exposed to its maleficent rays visited by sun-strokes which frequently destroy the equilibrium of the brain for life, but a constant shower of meteoric stones comes down from it which greatly endangers the lives and property of nations or individuals who reside in houses of glass. Let us learn to prize adequately the constitutional protector which shelters us, and devote our united efforts to keeping it in repair. Let it not be for a moment supposed that the North is not interested equally with the South in this matter. If the area of our common country is extended seemingly for their sole benefit, do we not have the privilege of paying for it? If we do not ourselves enjoy the Patriarchal Institution, are we not invited by our Southern brethren to partake those healthy exercises of the chase which are incident to it, and which tend to keep in activity the more vigorous qualities of body and mind? And if we cannot ourselves have the satisfaction of punishing Drayton and his nefarious accomplices, is it not at least gratifying to

think that it is in our jail that they are rotting, that it is our irons which are eating into their atheistical and parricidal flesh, and that if the over-leniency of the law did not screen them from that extreme penalty which they deserve, we should pay for at least three quarters of the Constitutional halter which swung them out of a country to whose principles they are a disgrace?

THE NOMINATIONS FOR THE PRESIDENCY

The position of the thinking portion of the Whig Party reminds one of the old Scottish ballad beginning

"Our gude man cam hame at een
And hame cam he,
And there he saw a saddle horse
Where nae horse suld be.
'O how cam this horse here?
How can this be?
How cam this horse here
Without the leave o' me?'
'A horse!' quoth she;
'Ay, a horse,' quoth he;
'Ye auld blind dotard carl,
Blinder mat ye be,
'T is naething but a bonny milch cow
My Minnie sent to me.'"

The story goes on in the same way. The Gudeman sees many other suspicious circumstances, which are explained in an equally satisfactory manner by his Gudewife, till he is at last fain to believe that a truculent gentleman in a beard is only a milkmaid. So

the working part of The Whig Organization comes home at evening, takes up its newspaper, and finds that its convention has nominated General Taylor.

"How is this?" it exclaims, "a military chieftain?"

"Ah yes, true," replies gudewife Convention, "but then opposed to the Mexican War, and, indeed, to all wars, and most anxious to beat into ploughshares the several swords which have been presented to him."

"But is he Whig?"

"We hope that our constituents are willing to repose some confidence in their convention, or, at least, that they are not so lost to all piety as to refuse to trust in Providence."

"But he is a slaveholder."

"Perhaps so, but Mr. Jones told the Honorable Mr. Smith that he overheard Colonel Brown say to Judge Green that he had it on good authority that General Taylor was opposed not only to the extension of slavery but to the Institution itself."

"Is it true that in the Florida war he recommended bloodh——?"

"Gentlemen, excuse us for interrupting you, but he is another Cincinnatus and a second Washington. We have, as you see, selected for your candidate a peace man, a genuine Whig, and an opponent of slavery. What can you ask more?"

"To be sure," answer the mass of the party, and cast their votes accordingly. If any one murmur, his opposition is at once stigmatized as factious.

General Taylor must certainly have been born with a silver spoon in his mouth. That he is possessed of every good quality is at once quietly taken for granted. His partisans work as strange miracles about him as Mephistopheles did with his gimlet in Auerbach's cellar. The guests had but to call for white wine or red, and a few twirls of the gimlet into the wainscot would set the desired liquor abroach. In the same way one needs only to inquire for any desirable quality of intellect or character and a turn or two of the political augurs indicates at once its hitherto unsuspected existence in General Taylor. One can hardly conceive of so many and so great virtues combined except in an epitaph or an obituary. It may safely be conceded that so perfect a character could never have been formed except under the fostering influence of slavery. In comparison with the General, Cerberus hides his diminished heads and acknowledges himself outdone in a walk which has hitherto been considered peculiarly his own. Taylor must be a great many more than three gentlemen at once.

But among all the virtues that illustrate this hero, it is curious that the Whigs should maintain so pro-

found a silence in regard to that particular one which chiefly led to his being selected as a candidate. It is possible that they may be fearful of exciting a suspicion that so much goodness centred in a single individual is an impossibility. We have called it the one virtue, but perhaps we should rather have spoken of the hundred and ten virtues, that being precisely the number of "farm-servants" owned by the modern Cincinnatus. It was at the thought of this that the Whig Diogeneses, seeking for a man, laid aside their lanterns at once. Here at last Christian heroism was found united with practical availability.

Another strong argument in Taylor's favor is found in the candidate nominated by the opposite party. We are not at all surprised that the opinion should be pretty general that anybody is better than Cass. But we must confess that in the particular merit which constitutes availability, we think the Michigan General even more deserving than the Kentucky one. If the advocates of Taylor are able to bring one hundred and ten reasons for his nomination, it must be recollected that it was merely the accident of his birth which enabled them to do so. General Cass had the misfortune to be brought into the world in a non-slaveholding state, but he has struggled nobly to overcome the disadvantages of his birthplace and education. He has been as good as

circumstances would allow. Disabled from holding slaves, he has shown that he is quite willing to be one himself. That man must be sound on the question of slavery who cringes at once to the ferocious rapacity of ignorance in the North and West, and to the sleeker and more catlike predatory instincts of selfishness at the South.

In nominating their candidates, both parties have done their worst. Both have silently confessed that the problem of a democratic government is incapable of an honest solution as far as they are concerned. Each has endeavored to bid highest for the favor of the brutal and base fraction of the people. The Democrats have established a code of national morals which leaves the *not* out of the eighth commandment, and have selected as the fitting exponent of their creed a man who thinks it right to steal your neighbor's land, if he is weaker, and your neighbor also, if he is darker, than yourself. The Whigs, in weighing the merits of their several candidates, threw into the scale a bloody sword, and lest that should not be enough, added the heavier iniquity of a bloody slave-whip.

It remains to be seen whether the honester men of both parties are willing again to be quiet under their quadrennial sale to the South. The word *no* is the shibboleth of politicians. There is some malforma-

tion or deficiency in their vocal organs which either prevents their uttering it at all, or gives it so thick a pronunciation as to be unintelligible. A mouth filled with the national pudding, or watering in the expectation of it, is wholly incompetent to this perplexing monosyllable. One might imagine that America had been colonized by a tribe of those nondescript African animals, the Aye Ayers. As Pius Ninth has not yet lost his popularity in this country by issuing a bull against slavery, our youth, who are always ready to hurrah for anything, might be practised in the formation of the refractory negative by being encouraged to shout *Viva Pio Nono*.

If present indications are to be relied upon, no very general defection from the ranks of either party will result from the nominations. Politicians, who have been so long accustomed to weigh the expediency of any measure by its chance of success, are unable to perceive that there is a kind of victory in simple resistance. It is a great deal to conquer only the habit of slavish obedience to party. The great obstacle is the reluctance of politicians to assume moral rather than political ground. We think that the Whig Party threw away its last chance in basing its opposition to Texas on the Constitution, instead of on the plain right and wrong of the question. Texas was the *angulus iste*, the "*adjinin' heater-*

piece," which the North and South were equally desirous of fencing in. But the Whigs were afraid to make slavery the issue, and their cry of *unconstitutional* was so much wasted breath. We hope that the lesson has not been thrown away upon them, and that they will oppose Taylor because he is a slaveholder and not because he is not a Whig.

Whether dissatisfaction with the doings of the two National Conventions will result in any general and united action is more than doubtful; yet we cannot but hope that the wedges have entered which shall split both the great party organizations, from neither of which can Abolitionists expect any sympathy or aid. We cannot think of any candidate on whom the two dissentient fragments could consent to unite. Without union they are comparatively powerless. If we may judge by the past, the majority of the seceders from both sides will make use of the hot water into which they have respectively gotten themselves, to boil those conscientious peas which would otherwise gall their feet in the pilgrimage forward to the promised land of Office, or back to the flesh-pots of Party, though indissolubly connected with the making of bricks without straw.

L. M. C.

SYMPATHY WITH IRELAND

If there be anything remarkable in human sympathy (and generally we cannot say that we see anything very remarkable in it), it is the distance at which it loves to exert itself. It becomes more intense in proportion as its object is farther off. Thousands of persons let their own souls get shockingly out at the elbows, while they are busy sending spiritual tailors to cut and make garments of righteousness for the inhabitants of countries where it is the fashion to wear nothing but the original skin.

The last spasms of sympathy with which the public mind has been agitated have been somewhat inconsistent, one with another. We are asked to sympathize with the Yucatecos, against whom the native race has risen in insurrection, and with the Irish, who are preparing for a similar proceeding against their conquerors. The aboriginal tribes who inhabited the southern portion of this continent had reached a state of culture compared to which any point in the history of Ireland before its conquest

is absolute barbarism. Their monuments compare not unfavorably with those of ancient Egypt, which, if not the mother of religion, art, and learning, was certainly the channel through which they flowed from East to West. It is true that the Central Americans sacrificed human victims, but so did the Romans; and the Irish, even yet, offer up a landlord now and then. We ourselves have three men now in jail at Washington waiting to be immolated on the altar of our National Moloch.

But we did not mean to draw any parallel between the Central Americans and the Irish. We merely intended to say that, as far as could be judged by the past, they were the more capable of the two of an independent existence. We believe in the capacity of every race for self-government, but we are now endeavoring to look at the matter from that point of view which men commonly take. The question, as we shall presently show, has several analogies which are interesting to Abolitionists. We wish to compare the claims of the Irish with certain other claims which concern us more nearly.

The miserable condition of Ireland is first of all invariably attributed to the fact of her being a conquered country. But this will not serve, for England was also conquered, and by the very same race. However, the question for us is, not what has made

Ireland what she is, nor whether she would gain by a separation from England, but whether we can consistently sympathize with her present efforts at regeneration.

Can we, who have entered into a compact to suppress any attempt at insurrection on the part of an enslaved race, beside whose sufferings the condition of the Irish seems heaven itself, — can we throw the first stone at England? If Nat Turner was wrong, can John Mitchel be right? We Americans are unfortunately situated. It will not do for us to follow the natural impulse of our hearts. We must look carefully round us before we undertake to encourage attempts at liberty. While we sympathize with treason abroad, must we not logically encourage it at home? We are so thoroughly compromised about, that we are suspicious of a "miching mallecho which means mischief" in all kinds of humanity.

There are many things in Mr. Mitchel's course which no sensible man could approve of, many which would shock a humane one. However ardent and sincere may have been his love of country, it is plain that his vision was bounded by the walls of the "United Irishman" office. The French Revolution seems to have turned his brain. He became persuaded that a government might be as easily overthrown by a riot in a provincial town, as by the

rebellion of a metropolis whose ideas to a greater or less degree shaped those of an entire country. His tirades against "the Saxon" were not only childish, but bore exclusive evidence of a mind not at all alive to the hopes and demands of the age. A professed reformer who endeavors to reëxcite the antipathies of race must be so far either a fool or a hypocrite. This is the game of the tyrant, not of the patriot. It has been by means of these antipathies — the growth of barbarous and bloody times — that the greatest national crimes have been perpetrated, and the foulest national oppressions sustained.

Neither can we sympathize with Mr. Mitchel in his appeal to arms. Setting aside the question of its morality, it was unwise. Matters are wonderfully simplified for a government when the demand for the redress of grievance is removed from the region of ideas to that of physical force. The oppressor can argue best with the cannon and the bayonet. The pike cannot reach him, though it be, as Mr. Mitchel advised, on the end of a good ashen pole ten feet long. But invincible thought overleaps the wall of the fortress, and reaches him through the serried ranks of his guards. A thousand chances may bring about the defeat of the rebel, which would have been the allies of the peaceful reformer. It is

hard fighting with ideas. The reformer is in league with them, but the rebel sets them in array against himself. He has to contend against the ideas of social order, of government, and many more whose hold upon men's minds, naturally strong, has been tightened by invariable prescription. The *habit* of oppression can only be gradually conquered. It strengthens itself against a sudden and violent attack. The rebel, too, has set in motion forces which he cannot guide or control. The degraded ignorance of the oppressed, which affords an unanswerable argument against the tyrant, may be hurried into crimes which will be laid to the charge of freedom. The English hated and feared O'Connell, but they laughed at Mitchel.

We were not among those who were shocked at the *kind* of weapons recommended by Mr. Mitchel and his friends. If the necessity of violence be once granted, we do not see much to choose on the score of morality between bayonets and brickbats, prussic acid and powder. The object being to knock your enemy on the head, we cannot perceive any moral distinction between the staff of a pike and the butt of a musket. We believe God to be fully as well pleased with broken bottles as with grapeshot. The more savage war can be made to appear, the better. It is only sentimentalism which sees any difference

between the medal voted by Congress and hung in the general's parlor and the dried scalps rattling on the end of a pole at the door of the wigwam.

We cannot understand how those who admit the necessity of any kind of government based upon physical force can object to the trial and sentence of Mr. Mitchel. The question of his being abstractly right or wrong we have nothing to do with now. As far as the English government was concerned, he was unquestionably guilty. He asked for force, and he got it. He was bold enough to risk the hazard of the game, and the throw has been against him. He should have remembered that the government played with loaded dice.

We are willing to forgive everything to the exasperation which the condition of his unhappy country must have produced in a mind constitutionally inflammable. We believe him to have been sincere and devoted, though mistaken, and as such he deserves our deepest commiseration. We may take this position consistently as individuals, but as Americans we must be dumb. What has Mr. Mitchel done that we should give to him the sympathy which we deny to Sayres, Drayton, and English? The act which led to their imprisonment was a more disinterested one than any for which he can claim credit. If they had suceeeded, they could not possibly have

expected any reward but the approval of their own consciences. With Mr. Mitchel the case was different. It was something to be the spokesman of a disaffected people; a successful rebellion would have made him their chief.

If there be any reason for our encouraging rebellion in Ireland, we ought *a fortiori* to promote insurrection among our slaves. Still more strongly would logical necessity compel us to foment it among the inhabitants of the provinces we have just conquered from Mexico. The English government is fully as humane, as wise, and as just as our own. The social system of one half of our own country is worse than that of England. Our government devotes itself to the extension and perpetuation of this system, while that of England is taking steps towards reform. Those among us who bear a constant and outspoken testimony against American sins may be allowed to speak of English ones. One nation may oppress a white race, and the other a black one, but tyranny is of one complexion all the world over.

Some enthusiastic spirits are desirous that our government should interfere; others that an expedition should be fitted out for the rescue of Mitchel. There is not the slightest chance that government will do the one or allow the other. Slavery is too cunning to put its ugly head into the mouth of the

British lion. If any private persons are anxious to get up an expedition for the rescue of imprisoned martyrs for the cause of freedom, they can direct it towards the jail at Washington with more propriety and consistency than against the hulks at Bermuda.

WHAT WILL MR. WEBSTER DO?

It is astonishing to see how fond men are of company. We demand a select society even upon the fence, and will not jump on this side or that till we have made as accurate a prospective census as possible. There are few who are willing to do either a good or bad deed alone. Right and wrong are settled by majorities, as if the responsibility could be lessened by increasing the denominator. God and Satan are looked upon as candidates, and the one or the other shall have a chance for our vote in proportion as he seems likely to get the votes of other people. We weigh availabilities, and measure accurately the amount of noise at the ratification meetings. The achievement we find most difficult is simply to be ourselves. Yet nature is forever digging pitfalls of one kind or another to entrap us into individuality. Separate as planets she made us, revolving each in his own orbit, mutually sustained and exchanging gifts of light and warmth, the interdependent isolation of each being necessary to the harmony of all. But we contrive to break through

the natural laws of spiritual gravitation, rushing headlong together to make one shapeless planet out of the wrecks of a system.

When the choice between the strait way and the broad is offered us, we glance out of the corner of our eye to see how Mr. A. or Mr. B. is likely to go, having a fancy that the footsteps of either of those eminent men can settle the point at which the roads shall respectively come out. But, though we may thus be said to be carried by the legs of Messrs. A. and B. rather than by our own, we must remember that there is a third pair which will smart equally with the other two at the end of the journey. We may be borne, if we will, upon another man's shoulder, but we carry our responsibility all the while upon our own.

We understand all this theoretically very well, but we never practically act upon it. Each of us is furnished with an inward consciousness which distinguishes right from wrong as infallibly as the electric spark selects the iron and shuns the glass. But we have substituted for right and wrong the expedient and inexpedient, toward both of which our mentor is indifferent. Between these we cannot decide absolutely, but only circumstantially, being thrown out of ourselves for a choice. We put judgment (as we name the result of worldly experience)

in the place of conscience. Yet even the judgment we make use of is of a very limited kind. It is based wholly upon the experience of our own Little Pedlington. If our induction were comprehensive enough, we should see that we might as well attempt to anchor the globe where it is, as to oppose our temporary and fugitive expedients to the tendencies of the human mind. It is like trying to bind God with green withes.

After all, even in estimating expediencies we are loth to trust ourselves. We desire rather the judgment of this or that notable person, and dare not so much as write *Honesty is the best policy*, or any other prudent morality, till he has set us a copy at the top of the page. In Massachusetts just now there are we know not how many people waiting for Mr. Webster's action on the recent nomination for the presidency, and no doubt there is hardly a village in the country which has not its little coterie of self-dispossessed politicians expecting in like manner the moment when the decision of some person, whose stomach does the thinking for theirs, shall allow them to take sides.

"What will Mr. Webster do?" asks Smith. "Greatest mind of the age!" says Brown. "Of *any* age," adds Jones triumphantly. Meanwhile the greatest mind of any age is sulking at Marshfield.

It has had its rattle taken away from it. It has been told that *nominations* were not good for it. It has not been allowed to climb up the back of the presidential chair. We have a fancy that a truly great mind can move the world as well from a three-legged stool in a garret as from the easiest cushion in the White House. Where the great mind is, there is the president's house, whether at Wood's Hole or Washington.

We would not be understood as detracting in the least from Mr. Webster's reputation as a man of great power. He has hitherto given evidence of a great force, it seems to us, rather than of a great intellect. But it is a force working without results. It is like a steam-engine which is connected by no band with the machinery which it ought to turn. A great intellect leaves behind it something more than a great reputation. The earth is in some way the better for its having taken flesh upon itself. We cannot find that Mr. Webster has communicated an impulse to any of the great ideas which it is the destiny of the nineteenth century to incarnate in action. His energies have been absorbed by Tariff and Constitution and Party — dry bones into which the touch of no prophet could send life. Party could hardly take up the whole of a great mind so that nothing would be left over for humanity. It

is not true that even the greatest intellects must be subservient to the circumstances by which they find themselves surrounded. It is the characteristic of such that they create their own circumstances. Where they are is always the centre. If they must, as is commonly said, take the world as they find it, they must not leave it so. Their destiny is a beneficent and creative one. Thus far Mr. Webster has created nothing but a fame.

What will Mr. Webster do? This is of more importance to him than to the great principle which is beginning to winnow the old parties. This, having God on its side, can do very well without Mr. Webster, — but can he do as well without it? The truth of that principle will not be affected by his taking one side or the other. But *occasio celeris*, and the great man is always the man of the occasion. He mounts and guides that mad steed whose neck is clothed with thunder, and whose fierce *Ha! ha!* at the sound of the trumpets appals weaker spirits. Two or three years ago we spoke of one occasion which Mr. Webster allowed to slip away from him. That was the annexation of Texas. Another is offered him now. We do not believe that party ever got what was meant for mankind. Mr. Webster has now once more an opportunity of showing which he was meant for. If party be large enough to hold

him, then mankind can afford to let him go. Nevertheless it is sad to imagine him still grinding for the Philistines. We cannot help thinking that his first appearance as Samson grasping the pillars of the idol-temple, would draw a fuller house than Mr. Van Buren in the same character.

Just at this moment, however, Mr. Webster is more like Achilles than Samson. His Briseis has been taken away from him, and he sits angrily inactive in his tent at Marshfield. There is this point of unlikeness, that if the Whigs can take their Troy at all, they can do it without him. Mr. Webster's unwilling coöperation would bring them but little strength. If the country is to be carried for General Taylor, the men who can hurrah are of more consequence than the men who can reason. People are to open their mouths and shut their eyes and they will get something which will make them very wise indeed — probably a mouthful of red pepper. On the other hand, should Mr. Webster go over to the seceders, his loss would be a very serious one. Let that great force of his but once get a chance to work freely, let it be inspired by contact with great principles, and it would become irresistible. The old *quidquid delirant reges* will not apply here. The more the leaders fall out, the more chance is there that the people will get their own again.

Let us concede to Mr. Webster's worshippers that he has heretofore given proof enough of a great intellect, and let us demand of him now that he make use of, perhaps, his last chance to become a great *Man*. Of what profit are the hands of a giant in the picking up of pins? Let him leave banks and tariffs to more slender fingers. If ever a man was intended for a shepherd of the people, Daniel Webster is. The people are fast awakening to great principles; what they want is a great man to concentrate and intensify their diffuse enthusiasm. And it is not every sort of greatness that will serve for the occasion. Webster, if he would only let himself go, has every qualification for a popular leader. The use of such a man would be that of a conductor to gather, from every part of the cloud of popular indignation, the scattered electricity which would waste itself in heat-lightnings, and grasping it into one huge thunderbolt let it fall like the messenger of an angry god among the triflers in the Capitol.

Let Mr. Webster give over at last the futile task of sowing the barren sea-shore of the Present, and devote himself to the Future, the only legitimate seedfield of great minds. Slimmer and glibber men will slip through the labyrinth of politics more easily than he. He will always be outstripped and

outwitted. Politics are in their nature transitory. He who writes his name on them, be the letters never so large, writes it on sand. The next wind of shifting opinion puffs it out forever. It is never too late to do a wise or great action. We do not yet wholly despair of hearing the voice of our Daniel reading the *Mene, Mene,* written on the wall of our political fabric.

THE NEWS FROM PARIS

MANY persons seem to consider the recent mournful events in Paris as decisive proof that the French people are incapable of self-government. Indeed, the news of the French Revolution of February was received with ill-disguised coldness even in the United States. The age of chivalry in passing away made room for the gradual development of the age of respectability, whose most exact type was Louis Philippe. The kingship of the Napoleon of Peace was more thoroughly eclipsed by the pea-jacket in which he effected his flight than by his dethronement. Little sympathy was felt for exiled majesty with only a five-franc piece in his pocket. But, though the Broker King was laughed at, a revolution which lowered the price of stocks was not regarded with any favor. If the money market were convulsed it mattered little whether the stock of humanity rise or fall, those being contingencies by which very few holders would be affected.

The last news from Paris was accordingly not ungratifying to respectability. As a general rule, pro-

phets of evil are rather apt to be pleased with the success of their vaticinations. They are quite willing that their sagacity should be complimented at the expense of their benevolence. What else could be expected, we are triumphantly asked in the present instance, when the very foundations of society were overturned? Alas, the mistake lies in considering dollars and not man as the foundation! It is a mistake which must be driven out of men's minds even at the expense of many more such horrible events as this at Paris. Where the noxious gases of ignorance and starvation have been fermenting for ages in darkness, the introduction of the first exploring candle may produce an explosion.

The numbers of the late Parisian insurgents are estimated at fifty thousand. It is perfectly idle to say that plunder and violence were their objects. They are the very same men who wrote *Mort aux voleurs* upon the walls of the Tuileries during the revolution of February. Disappointment that certain theories of government had not been soon enough realized in practice could never have driven them to an armed insurrection. Such men are not theorists. The great questions of social reform are not with them matters of speculation in easy chairs, but the stern lessons set every day by Poverty and Famine. Want, and not wish, is at the bottom of armed insurrections. Here

are the two horns of the dilemma: either these men had a definite object of radical change in the social system, or else there were fifty thousand men in Paris so degraded that the mere love of bloodshed or hope of plunder could stir them to revolt. In either case society was to blame. The social order which starved fifty thousand men cannot be of God; that which makes brutes of them must be of the Devil.

We are willing to confess that we have no kind of fellow-feeling with the satisfaction which we have heard and seen expressed that the insurgents were *put down*. It would have been infinitely more joyous news to us to have heard that they had been *raised up*. The great problem of the over-supply of labor is not to be settled by a decimation of the laboring class, whether by gunpowder or starvation. Society in a healthy condition would feel the loss of every pair of willing and useful hands thrust violently out of it. That these Parisian *ouvriers* were driven to rebellion by desperation is palpable. That they had ideas in their heads is plain from their conduct immediately after the revolution. They were suffering then. It was they who had achieved the victory over the old order of things. In the then anarchic state of the capital, rapine, had that been their object, was within easy reach. But the revolution of February was not the chaotic movement of men to whom any

change was preferable to the wretched present. Not so much subversion, as subversion for the sake of organization, was what they aimed at. The giant Labor did not merely turn over from one side to the other for an easier position. Rather he rose up —

"Like blind Orion hungry for the morn."

It was *light* which the people demanded. Social *order* was precisely the thing they wished for in place of social chaos. Government was what they asked. They had learned by bitter experience that it was on the body of old King Log, Laissez-Faire, that King Stork perched to devour them. *Let alone* is good policy after you have once got your perfect system established to let alone. There is not in all history an instance of such heroic self-denial as that which was displayed by what it is the fashion to call the mob of Paris during the few days immediately following the flight of the Orleans dynasty. What was the shield which the noble Lamartine held up between the provisional government and the people? Simply the idea of the Republic! And this idea was respected by starving men with arms in their hands.

No, a mob is a body of men in whom the immediate passion or interest of the moment triumphs over reason. If the middle class of France do not appreciate the situation in which they are placed, if they

do not grasp the occasion which is offered them, if they do not fulfil the destiny to which they are called, it is they who will be the mob. The Revolution of 1830 was the work of the middle class. Louis Philippe ceased to represent the idea of that revolution, and the throne crumbled away from under him. The Revolution of 1848 had been achieved by the working class. The *Bourgeoisie* stand in the same relation toward this which Louis Philippe occupied toward the last. Let them not show themselves to be Bourbons in their blindness to the present and their imperviousness to the experience of the past.

The rest of Europe seems destined to be convulsed by a struggle of races. The wounds of nationality are those which there smart the most keenly. In France the contest is between classes. The present system of society seems like a raft put hastily together out of fragments of the wreck of feudalism. It is so crazy that unless every one stand still there is danger of all going overboard. It is so ill provisioned that a part of the crew must be thrown into the sea or serve as food for the rest. In the war of classes the concession must always be on the part of the least desperate. But unhappily concession is not and never will be cure. It is not the particular fester of each city, country, or generation that must be got rid of. The disease itself which produces them must be

conquered, and even this is of comparatively little avail while the cause of the disease remains ungrappled with. Patent disinfecters will answer a temporary purpose, but as long as the miasma factories are left in active operation you will have the pestilence. The experiment of *driving in* the disease, which has just been tried in Paris, and which seems to give so much satisfaction to the regular faculty of state doctors, is the most useless and most dangerous of all.

We do not profess to point out a remedy. But we have a right to demand that governments and governing classes everywhere should diligently and honestly seek for one, and should examine the plans and propositions of those who have made social science the study of their lives instead of sneering at them. Those who desire the application of a universal remedy throw no obstacle in the way of individual and immediate philanthropy. They sympathize with all those who in any way, however limited, are laboring

> "to make less
> The sum of human wretchedness,"

but their chief hope is to combine fragmentary benevolence into a system which shall render private philanthropy useless by removing its objects.

No one can deplore more sincerely than we do an armed appeal for justice. But still more deeply do

we lament the cause of it. Starvation and slaughter are both bad, but while you tolerate the one you are creating the necessity for the other. Are the atrocities of men driven to insurrection so horrible as the fact that society has allowed them to become capable of their commission? If violence be not the way of obtaining social rights, neither is it capable of maintaining social wrongs. A permanent truce was never written in blood. It is in those crimson characters that men inscribe the hope of vengeance and the memory of wrong.

THE BUFFALO CONVENTION

The most important event in recent American politics is undoubtedly the Convention at Buffalo, which will have taken place when this number of the Standard reaches its readers. Although the wires of the magnetic telegraph will have already superseded speculation with certainty, yet a few remarks on the probable effect of the Buffalo nomination on the elections may not be out of place.

It will be well to settle distinctly in our minds precisely what the nature of the "Free Soil" movement is, and to keep it constantly in view in our remarks upon it. A party should be tried, not by our own wishes of what it might be, or our own convictions of what it ought to be, but by its own professions and the objects which it proposes to itself. It should always be remembered that the "Free Soil" party is not an Abolition party in any sense of the word. Yet perhaps it will be wiser for us to be thankful for what they are than to reproach them with what they are not, and do not claim to be. Let us rejoice that they are a party

who have first surmised, and at last satisfied themselves of the existence and necessity of Conscience. Let us not counsel drowning Freedom to push indignantly away the narrow plank they would throw to her because they have not sent a fleet of seventy-fours.

The view that we are inclined to take of the matter is this: that, however inadequate the Wilmot Proviso may be, it is only the first forward step into which the politicians of the free States have been forced by the onward pressure of the people behind them. It is the first step toward an ulterior object, and not the object itself. It will be as impossible for the leaders of the Free Soil movement to stand still after they have taken this one step, as it was for them to stop where they already were. The fresh instincts of the popular heart clearly tend to a point beyond and above them. Unless the new party is content to move onward, the single object now proposed being obtained, affairs will resolve themselves into precisely their old condition before the movement began. The momentarily distracted attention of the country will at once revert to the old issue, and the simple question will again become one between Slavery and Freedom. The struggle between these two must be one of life and death.

As Abolitionists we are not immediately concerned in a question of the acquisition of new terri-

tory. We may differ in opinion upon that point, but we can only have one opinion as to whether Slavery shall be permitted to blast the territory when acquired. In respect to this, Abolitionists and the mere opponents of the aggressive policy of Slavery occupy common ground. For non-voters, of course, the nomination of the Buffalo Convention has no immediate and personal interest, but we do not perceive how any voting Anti-Slavery man can hesitate as to the best course for him to pursue in the present contingency. To him, it is still permitted to weigh policies and expediencies. The single question for him is how he shall cast his vote so as to be most efficacious *pro hac vice.*

Unquestionably the most important office which the new party is destined to perform is the breaking up of the old organizations already hopelessly corrupt. As long as Whigs and Democrats are allowed to follow their single vocation of throwing dust in the eyes of the people, it will be impossible for Slavery to be seen in all its hideous deformity. So far as the Wilmot Proviso is concerned, we may consider that the agitation at the North has already virtually settled the question. A singular and rapid transformation has been effected in many members of Congress, and a pretty large number of *ci-devant* jackals have been changed into lions for the nonce.

The issue, then, is narrowed down to this single point. The "Free Soil" party can only be useful in destroying the old parties, and how will it be most effective for this end? It is clear that the candidate of such a party need not necessarily be an Abolitionist. He must simply be the person on whom the largest number of votes can be concentrated. Mr. Van Buren, it appears to us, is clearly that person. He has already received the nomination of the largest body of seceders. Men's minds have become accustomed to consider him as the exponent of the movement, and he is fully as much of an Abolitionist as any other candidate who is likely to be proposed. To be sure, he has declared that he would veto a bill for the abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia, but he occupies here the same ground taken by John Quincy Adams, and has, moreover, as we are informed on good authority, expressed his willingness to sign an act for the removal of the seat of government into a free State. It appears to us highly probable that Mr. Hale, who has never assumed an aggressive Anti-Slavery position, will give all his influence to the support of Mr. Van Buren.

Whatever may be the objects or the policy of the leaders in the Free Soil rebellion, we are certain that the people have a sincere and definite purpose.

To prepare them for the new aspect of affairs it has been necessary to represent the institution of Slavery itself in tolerably hateful colors. The people believe not only that they are doing something for the restriction, but for the total overthrow of Slavery. As soon as they find that their measures are inadequate, they will try new ones. The popular mind is straightforward and simple, and does not willingly put up with shams.

The present position of politics, then, is encouraging to Abolitionists, although the Free Soil party is only endeavoring to attain a narrow and transitory object. It is encouraging, because we can see underneath all the various developments of a party a genuine Anti-Slavery influence exerting itself, and coming nearer and nearer to the surface. The little acorn of the Liberator has in seventeen years become a great tree. The public mind is becoming more and more impregnated with the principles of freedom, and will move forward as regardless of the new party as of the old ones. This new party will, in spite of itself, interpret the "*ultra*" Abolitionists to the masses. We may well rejoice that it has arisen to give concentration and definite direction to a popular sentiment which it can neither satisfy nor retard.

THE IRISH REBELLION

At this moment it is probable that an insurrection has broken out in Ireland. What is to be gained by it we do not clearly see ; but the popular leaders seem to have adopted the principle of reform if they can get it, and a rebellion at all events. They have resolved that the people shall metaphorically get a bellyful, and that after the Barmecide entertainment of the past two years a dessert of grape and gunpowder tea shall follow. Their countrymen ask for bread, and they give them a pike. They ask for education, and instruction in the infantry drill is offered them. We cannot help thinking that the drills it were wise to be busiest about are those in which their potatoes are planted. If the tenures of land could be changed or the potato-rot cured by an insurrection, we could see some reason in it. We are not of those who believe that the tree of liberty must be watered with blood.

We are not aware that the present Irish leaders have any plan except downright anarchy. That they have an earnest desire to remove the evils under

which their unhappy country is suffering we have no doubt; but they offer nothing as a substitute for the present state of affairs. Mr. O'Connell was not by any means a profound statesman, but he saw the necessity of concentrating the popular mind upon some point of peaceful agitation. Whether repeal would have proved to be the panacea he expected is doubtful; but the continual agitation of the question drew attention to the state of the country, and forced upon the English government the necessity of some measure of relief.

We cannot perceive that Messrs. O'Brien, Doheny, and Meagher are at all wiser than the ignorant multitudes whom they are proposing to lead — nowhere. It is very plain that they had no comprehension of the causes which brought about the French Revolution, or they would never have sent an embassy to Paris to ask for armed assistance. The Irish masses, at least, know what they want — work and food. That their leaders are quite unable to solve the problem proposed to them evidently appears by their putting arms into the hands of the people instead of tools, and cries for vengeance into their mouths instead of bread. That they have no constructive talent is proved by this: that, if their insurrection were successful and the independence of Ireland attained, the first thing to be done would be to tear

down all which they have been so busy in building, and to get rid at all risks of the love of arms and hatred of the Saxon.

An insurrection in Ireland would be a godsend to the British Ministry. It would distract attention while measures for reform in England were quietly buried out of the way, and would enable Lord John Russell to seem to be doing something. It could be put down with ease, and would furnish an apology for governing the country worse than ever, if that be possible. Moreover, the leaders have done all they could to deprive the rebellion of what sympathy it would gain as the last mad expedient of despair, by constantly holding up revenge as its motive and end. If all the wrongs of the past are to be answered for, Mr. Smith O'Brien himself might be called upon to atone for some misdemeanor of the petty king whose lineal descendant he is. No doubt it would be gratifying to him to offer so fine an example of poetical justice.

Suppose for a moment that the English government should send no troops into Ireland, and should make no attempt to suppress the projected rising, what would the rebels accomplish? It can hardly be imagined that Mr. O'Brien, himself a large landholder, would head a movement for the extinction of the present titles to real estate. Nothing short of

some radical measure of this complexion will afford effectual relief to Ireland. The only permanent safeguard against famine is to give the people a deeper interest in the soil they cultivate and the crops they raise. It is the constant sense of insecurity that has made the Irish the shiftless and prodigal people which they are represented to be by all travelers. Education will be of no avail unless at the same time something be given them on which they can bring it to a practical bearing. Take away English opposition, and the present insurrection is directed against — what? We confess ourselves at a loss for an answer. The only insurrection which has done Ireland any real service was the one headed by Father Mathew. The true office of the Irish Washington would be to head a rebellion against thriftlessness, superstition, and dirt. The sooner the barricades are thrown up against these, the better. Ireland is in want of a revolution which shall render troops less necessary rather than more so.

Mr. Mitchel seems to have perceived that one great curse of Ireland was her land-tenures. Every square foot of the country is covered with its bit of sheepskin, and the peasant must pay for its removal in order to thrust his spade into the soil. But the armed preparation now going on does not, as far as we can learn, contemplate any bettering in this par-

ticular. Nor would it have, even if successful, any effect in lessening the other evil of absenteeism, unless it should in some way contrive to make Dublin a more desirable place to spend money in than London. Irish landlords after the revolution will be Irish landlords still, and we presume that a distress for rent would be very much the same thing in the hands of a Celtic or Saxon constable.

In the mean time meetings are held all over the United States to raise money and sympathy in aid of the revolt. At these assemblages the same inspired talk is heard which gives dignity to similar gatherings in Ireland. Geography, history, political economy, common sense, one after the other, yield gracefully to the fervid demands of patriotism. An Irish legion from America is to make a swoop at London, and thus create a diversion in favor of their compatriots. We have no doubt they would create diversion to their hearts' content, should they undertake the expedition. Another party proposes a descent upon Canada, where, of course, they would be received with open arms. The humanity or justice of this last plan is quite beyond our comprehension.

We should like to have any American favorer of Irish rebellion explain to us the moral distinction between Ireland and South Carolina. Are not our

treaty with England and our duty toward her as imperative as our constitutional compromises with Slavery? Are gentlemen who subscribe their five hundred dollars to forward a rising in Ireland to-day ready to give as much to bring about a similar result in Georgia to-morrow? If not, what is the difference? Would Mr. Greeley, who may be elected to a centuriony in the future legion, buckle on his knapsack and shoulder his musket to put down a revolution in Virginia? We have not the least idea that he would; and yet he would be bound to do so on the principle of allowing to Slavery all its constitutional guarantees. We know that there has always been a wide distinction between tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee, and it must be something very like it which enables a man consistently to give a ballot to a Kentucky landlord and a bullet to an Irish one. Mr. Greeley not a great while ago found grievous fault with the Abolitionists for being destructive. Abolitionists are indeed destructives as far as Slavery is concerned; but it is by constructing a public opinion against it, one of the first fruits of which is the formation of the Free Soil party, over which Mr. Greeley rejoices. But is Mr. Greeley's Irish sympathy to be applied to constructive purposes? We have always associated the name of Horace Greeley with peaceful reforms. We are sorry to see

him taking this military turn. He has altogether too good a head to be knocked into a cocked hat.

All that we ask of the friends of Ireland is that they should be consistent, and make no chromatic distinctions between white slaves and black. We do not ask them for subscriptions to lodge lead in the brains of the masters, but to help in effecting a lodgment for right ideas there and elsewhere.

FANATICISM IN THE NAVY

We have seen in the newspapers a letter from an officer in the navy concerning Liberia, which offers an occasion for a few comments. The author of the epistle is Captain Samuel Mercer, of whom we know nothing except the fact (which he mentioned himself) of his being "a Southern man." He seems to be a good enough sort of fellow and to have relished highly playing at international ceremonials with the new republic. The Liberian flag was saluted with twenty-one guns, and President Roberts with seventeen — thirty-eight guns in all. We trust that America will always be thus nobly regardless of expense in exhibiting her devotion to the cause of republicanism all over the world.

As far as the thirty-eight guns are concerned, we consider the conduct of Commodore Bolton as wholly unexceptionable. A salute conveys no pledges, nor can any disagreeable inferences be drawn from it. But the next day the commodore went on shore, accompanied by Captain Mercer and several other officers, and dined with the President. We hope to see

this affair thoroughly sifted in Congress, and an example made of the man who would thus abuse his high station to sap the foundations of our social fabric. Since the day when the Apostle Philip mounted the chariot of the Ethopian prime minister, we can hardly recollect an instance of more demoralizing amalgamation. Conceive of an American officer writing as follows : —

"If you take a family dinner with the President (and his hospitable door is always open to strangers), a blessing is asked upon the good things before you set to. Take a dinner at Colonel Heck's (who by the way keeps one of the very nicest tables), and 'mine host,' with his shiny black intelligent face, will ask a blessing on the tempting viands placed before you."

We shall expect to hear from Mr. Calhoun on this occasion one of those profound, masterly, convincing, and whatever else speeches which he is in the habit of making on the wrong side of every question that comes before him. With a subject like this, his giant intellect would be fitly tasked. Mr. Calhoun has favored us with statesmanlike views on the thrilling topic of brushing boots; let him now devote his mighty powers to impressing the mind of the country with a proper horror of dining with *niggers*.

We are not without our suspicions that Commodore Bolton has been belied in this matter. We cannot believe that the patriotism of any officer of our gallant navy, however long confined to salt-junk, would succumb to the temptation of President Roberts's fresh meat or Colonel Heck's nice table. Our confidence in Captain Mercer's veracity is somewhat shaken by the following statement. He says: —

"I took occasion one day to visit both houses of Congress, and listened with attention and interest to their debates on the new revenue or tariff law. Everything was done in the most decorous and orderly manner, each member seeming to understand the subject of discussion fully. The Senate consists of six members and the presiding officer, and the House of eight members and the speaker."

Now it is a fact familiar to every American that the African race is not only totally unfit for emancipation at this present moment, but incapable of self-government at any time. Reason and revelation combine to enforce this great truth. It is universally acknowledged that a retributive Providence made a kind of sandwich of Ham and his descendants to be devoured by the more fortunate offspring of Shem and Japhet. If our national vessels are not furnished with Bibles, it is time they were so. Our

officers should understand that it is a tenet of the Christian religion that the African race is inherently incapacitated for taking care of itself. It was Ham's indecorum which furnished General Taylor and Mr. Calhoun with farm-servants. The only thing which has never been quite plain to us is this — that as the curse fell upon Mr. and not Mrs. Ham, and as in such cases *partus sequitur ventrem*, we do not see very clearly — but it is dangerous to follow these abstruse speculations too far.

Captain Mercer goes on to say, —

"It was indeed, to me, a novel and interesting sight, although a Southern man, to look upon these emancipated slaves legislating for themselves, and discussing freely, if not ably, the principles of human rights, on the very continent, and perhaps the very spot, where some of their ancestors were sold into slavery."

We are rejoiced that a person who expresses sentiments so subversive of American principles confesses himself to be a Southern man. We should have been sorry to see a descendant of the Pilgrims so forgetful of what is due to his ancestry. Plymouth Rock continues true to the faith of the better days of the Republic.

Captain Mercer suggests some valuable hints in regard to the African slave-trade. He proposes to

establish a line of republics along the whole Western coast of Africa, and in that way to repress entirely this infamous traffic. Now, although the greater the number of republics the more presidents there would be to give dinners to our commodores, yet we think there are reasons of economy against such a scheme. Thirty-eight guns from each of our cruisers to each of the chief magistrates of these experimental states would amount to a heavy expense in the course of the year. We think it would be more advisable to extend the able and efficient jurisdiction of President Roberts along the whole line of coast. Then let the Congress of the republic invest the President with plenary powers, and place the whole Liberian navy and army at his disposal, and the thing is done. There is no knowing how much moral influence might be exerted if a proclamation of the President forbidding the traffic should be pinned to every palm-tree along the coast. The powers of the printing-press cannot be exaggerated. The same force which has just hurled a powerful European monarch from his throne would surely be able to crush an insignificant knot of African slave-traders, especially when that force is backed by the refined moral sense of Ashantee and Dahomey. Let an abundant supply of tracts be furnished to the powerful sovereigns of the West Coast, a perusal of

which would serve the double purpose of instructing them in religion and in English. There are, we believe, some fifty or more of these potentates who acknowledge the sway of the republic and pay into the treasury their innocent tribute of a date-stone every quarter.

Whatever we may think to be the best mode of putting an end to the African slave-trade, no patriot will hesitate a moment as to the necessity of putting it down. We feel sure that General Taylor is at least so far a Whig that he would approve of a protective measure of this description. No humane man doubts the wickedness of this odious business. But, apart from moral considerations, it interferes too much with a domestic branch of commerce not to demand our most earnest efforts for its extirpation. While Congress is making an appropriation of fifty thousand dollars to pay for the negroes captured in the Amistad, an admirable occasion is offered for appropriating three or four resolutions to the commendation of the Colonization Society as an instrument in the hands of Providence for suppressing the foreign trade in human flesh.

We hardly know what character to attribute to Captain Mercer. Sometimes we are inclined to think that he is an incendiary in disguise. Although he must be well aware (as what intelligent man is not?)

that freedom is "no boon" to the African race, he yet hypocritically descants on the happiness of the Liberians, and expresses a fiendish wish that others may be plunged into all the horrors of a pitiless freedom. He even goes so far as to say: —

"It is impossible to foresee what will be the fate of this infant republic struggling for national existence; but, whatever that fate may be, it cannot be denied that its career of advancement, up to this period, has been the most astonishingly rapid of any other people, under similar circumstances, that history, ancient or modern, brings to our knowledge."

It is impossible to estimate the deleterious effect of assertions like these upon the minds of the three million slaves of this country. As they are well known to be in the habit of reading the Liberator, this will doubtless meet their eye and assist that nefarious print in its efforts to make them discontented with that lot which renders them the happiest peasantry in the world.

We cannot follow Captain Mercer any farther. We trust that we have said enough to convince all readers that the Standard may lay claim to their support as a watchful guardian of American principles. We can only recommend that Government should be careful in future to send Northern men

to the coast of Africa who will be very sure not to write home any letters that can be construed into an endorsement of any liberal principles (as they are called) whatever.

EXCITING INTELLIGENCE FROM SOUTH CAROLINA

Though drawn for a moment in another direction by the affairs of Europe, where kings have been swept away after their game was up as if they were but the ivory potentates of the chess-board, the eyes of the world, of course, instantly revert to South Carolina, and the anxiety to know what course that Power will take in case the present crisis becomes more intense than ever. Fortunately we are enabled to relieve in some measure the painful suspense of mankind on this exciting topic. A meeting has been held at Charleston, Messieurs Butler, Burt, and Calhoun have spoken, the Empire has taken its resolution, and entered with renewed vigor upon its profound policy of nihilipilification.

Historians are not always great men, though great men furnish the materials of history. Their province in this respect, however, does not extend beyond the present, and we cannot but think that the Honorable A. P. Butler transcended his legitimate sphere in undertaking to manufacture past history outright. He says: —

"The Southern States were equals when they entered into the Confederacy, and they never would have joined it had they anticipated the attempts made to degrade them whenever the North acquired the power of doing so."

Now, unless Georgia and South Carolina only are implied in the word "Southern," the whole of this statement goes to show that it is not the "poor whites" alone who are suffering for the want of common schools in the slaveholding States. With the exception of those two colonies, the entire South, at the period referred to, not only anticipated, but was ready to concur in, attempts to repress the growth of Slavery, and even to extinguish it altogether. The Senator no doubt entertains the notion that cotton-planting has been carried on in South Carolina from the earliest ages, and that, when our first parents became aware of the necessity of garments, they imported calico thence to make them of.

Mr. Butler, having once tried his hand at original composition, and probably finding history easier to make than he expected, allows himself to be borne forward by the inspiration of the moment into a region of yet purer creativeness. He does not say that Bunker's Hill is on Sullivan's Island, or that Lexington in Kentucky was the scene of the Revolu-

tionary battle which goes by that name, but he exhibits a mental vigor capable even of triumphs such as these. He goes on to remark that, "when the Union was formed, the South was the stronger portion of it!" And here we take leave of Mr. Butler, barely suggesting that however important his services as a statesman may be, he should no longer rob his country of the delight it would receive from his labors as a writer of amusing fiction.

Mr. Burt, being a simple M. C., does not attempt to compete with a Senator in flights of imagination; but as Mr. Butler had taken one step toward South Carolinian independence by breaking away from the servile trammels of history, he turns the forces of his rebellion in another direction and makes a vigorous attack upon the usurped prerogatives of grammar. "We *would*," he says, "be degradingly expelled from New Mexico and California, and confined to prescribed limits." He then erects the word "North" into a nominative plural, and says, "So impatient were they (the North) for their victim that they would not even respect the Sabbath." He has here touched a fortunate chord, for if anything could be conceived capable of uniting the feelings of a slaveholding community, it must be an appeal to their religious sentiment. We have no doubt that this shocking instance of Northern irreligion

created a sensible horror in the minds of those dealers in human flesh who happened to be present, for such personages are rather apt to be punctilious in paying their dues of mint, anise, and cummin. And, of a truth, we ourselves are fain to consider it a somewhat alarming symptom that anything should be able to draw the North away from that manufacture of religious wooden-nutmegs to which it is wont to devote the first day of the week. Mr. Burt remarks in conclusion that —

"It is supposed upon a moderate calculation that there are at this time in the Northern States and in Canada upwards of thirty thousand runaway slaves, and this was property which by justice and comity the Northern States were bound to assist in reclaiming. The remedy for these abuses was not to be found in the ascendancy of parties, but it depended on their own stout hearts and strong arms."

In the fervor of his oratory he seems to forget that while the strong arms of the South were spreading terror and desolation through the Northern States and Canada, they would leave a hostile army of three millions in their rear. But we will not insist upon trifling items like these with gentlemen whose notions of statistics are so liberal.

We come now to the speech of Mr. Calhoun. He begins by an assault upon Priscian's head which

throws Mr. Burt quite into the shade, and puts the skull of that excellent grammarian beyond all hope from trepanning. Exhorting South Carolina to stand aloof from the coming presidential contest, he assigns as one reason for so doing, that —

"By entering into an active and heated political contest, each part abusing the candidate of their opponents and praising their own as exemplars of perfection, the State would be degraded to the level which they occupied."

Not satisfied with having carried away the prize from Mr. Burt (from whom he accepts the emendation of *would* for *should*), he next undertakes to compete with Mr. Butler in historic fiction. "The Missouri Compromise," he says, "was proposed by the North, who urged it on Congress and sacrificed every Northern man who voted against it." He concludes, like the other speakers, that in case of the worst it would be the duty of South Carolina to sacrifice her compassionate feelings, and, cutting the rest of the Union adrift, to abandon it to its wretched fate. The corresponding member of the English Free Trade League does not seem to correspond with that body in principle, for he immediately proceeds to estimate the amount of duties to be levied at the port of Charleston. Upon these chickens, to be hatched at some future period from

eggs as yet unlaid, he collects a revenue larger than that of the present Union.

In estimating the possibilities of the threatened revolution, the keen eye of a statesman like Mr. Calhoun detects at once certain elements of weakness in the body politic of the North. First in importance among these our profoundly informed politician places the Fourierites. It is painful to think of such men as Ripley, Shaw, Dwight, Godwin, and Greeley laying their heads together in a Catilinarian conspiracy. The moment South Carolina withdraws her protection, no doubt these red republicans will begin to throw up barricades. But Mr. Calhoun does not anticipate that the secession of his State will take place without a contest. The North will fight desperately against being cut off from the advantages which it now enjoys in the patronage of South Carolina. Mr. Calhoun expresses his willingness, old as he is, to take his share in the contest. Of course his share would be that of Generalissimo, and we think he would do well, in that case, to import the sword used by Mr. Smith O'Brien during the recent military operations in Ireland. It would be, with its thrilling historic associations, an appropriate weapon. Mr. Butler would probably be quite competent to the command of the naval forces.

How utterly childish is the scarecrow of Mr.

Calhoun's pumpkin-lantern rebellion! As an attempt to scare the rest of the Union it is absurd, but what shall we say of it as a scheme to intimidate manifest and irretrievable Destiny? We have all heard it said often enough that little boys must not play with fire, and yet if the matches are taken away from us, and put out of reach upon the shelf, we must need get into our little corner and scowl and stamp and threaten the dire revenge of going to bed without our supper. The earth shall stop till we get our dangerous plaything again. Dame Earth, meanwhile, who has more than enough household matters to mind, goes bustling hither and thither, as a hiss or a splutter tells her that this or that kettle of hers is boiling over, and before bedtime we are glad to eat our porridge cold and gulp down our dignity along with it.

Mr. Calhoun has somehow acquired the name of a great statesman, and if it be great statesmanship to put lance in rest and run a tilt at the Spirit of the Age with the certainty of being next moment hurled neck and heels into the dust amid universal laughter, he deserves the title. He is the Sir Kay of our modern chivalry. He should remember the old Scandinavian mythus. Thor was the strongest of gods, but he could not wrestle with Time, nor so much as lift up a fold of the great snake which knit

the universe together, and when he smote the Earth, though with his terrible mallet, it was but as if a leaf had fallen. Yet all the while it seemed to Thor that he had only been wrestling with an old woman, striving to lift a cat, and striking a stupid giant on the head.

And in old times doubtless the giants *were* stupid, and there was no greater sport for the Sir Launcelots and Sir Gawains than to go about skewering them upon lances and cutting off their great blundering heads with enchanted swords. But things have wonderfully changed. It is the giants nowadays that have the science and the intelligence, while the chivalrous Don Quixotes of Conservatism still cumber themselves with the clumsy armor of a bygone age. On whirls the restless globe through unsounded time, with its cities and its silences, its births and funerals, half light, half shade, but never wholly dark, and sure to swing round into the happy morning at last. With an involuntary smile we leave Mr. Calhoun and his friends letting slip their packthread cable with a crooked pin at the end of it to anchor South Carolina upon the bank and shoal of the Past.

TURNCOATS

When we first went to the theatre, that which delighted us most, among the thousand and one marvels, was the swiftness with which a change of costume was effected. The fairy had but to wave her wand — at once the peasant dress would fly off and the true prince stood confessed in all the splendor of soiled satin and copper lace. As we sit now in our quiet corner of the pit and watch the droll pantomime of politics, we are still more astonished at the dexterity with which we see coats turned before our very eyes. A moment ago the doughface livery was the only wear. Now everybody stands smiling in his new anti-slavery suit.

We are quite persuaded that if any unforeseen contingency should remove General Taylor from the presidential canvass, the Whig party would insist on Mr. Garrison's waiving all personal considerations and allowing his name to replace that of the Abolitionist General. Nothing short of such a nomination would satisfy their fiery zeal. Should Mr. G. at this moment return to Boston from his short vaca-

tion in cold water, the gentlemen of property and standing would drag him through the streets in a triumphal car by the very same rope with which they whilome conspired to raise him to a very different elevation.

The Buffalo Convention seems to have wrought this singular and sudden transformation. Mr. Van Buren has played the part of the Pied Piper of Hamelin. As long as he was piping away only Democratic rats, there was nobody like him. The Whig presses blew their trumpets before him, and it was doubtful for a short time whether he or General Taylor were the better Abolitionist. But presently the Whig children began to troop after him, and then all at once they began to discover the wolf's ears — no, the fox's brush — underneath the sheep's clothing. Then they could not away with such milk and water anti-slavery. He did not go far enough for them, not to mention the circumstance that he had no business to move forward an inch. He was pro-slavery in 1836, and it was his duty to continue so. They were shocked at such disgusting inconsistency. They revived that atrocious charge brought against him in the campaign of 1840, of raising cabbages in his garden at Kinderhook. They reproached him somewhat as Mr. Auld did Frederick Douglass when he called him a "*recreant* slave." They pointed to the broken

collar he had thrown away, and asked him if he were not ashamed of himself. They accused him of treachery to his former bad principles. Had he no respect for vested rights that he should infringe upon their patent for manufacturing anti-slavery professions on the eve of election? Poor Mr. Van Buren! they had served him so daintily for a day or two that he began to fancy himself a true Duke, but he finds that he was only plain Christopher Sly after all.

It has been remarked that *demireps* are always loudest in expressing their indignation, and always readiest to cast the first stone at any sister detected in frailty. Accordingly we find that Mr. Webster, with the tan of the Richmond October sun not yet out of his face, is shocked beyond measure at Mr. Van Buren's former pro-slavery attitude. Sitting upon the fence at Marshfield (where we will venture to say he does not raise a single cabbage — that emblem of Taylorism) he tells his neighbors that, should he and Mr. Van Buren meet upon the same political platform, they could not look at each other without laughing. If Mr. Webster's face look as black as it is said to have done just after the Philadelphia nomination, we think it the last thing in the world that any one would venture even a smile at. Mr. Webster finds fault with Mr. Van Buren because Northern Democratic senators voted in favor of the

annexation of Texas. But where was Mr. Webster himself? If he foresaw that Texas would be a Trojan horse, why did he not say so? If people would not come to hear him in Faneuil Hall, could he not have gathered his friends and neighbors together at Marshfield, as he did last week? It is perfectly clear now by actual demonstration, as it was clear then to persons who thought about the matter, that if Mr. Webster had put himself at the head of the opposers of annexation, Texas would never have been annexed and he would have been the next President of the United States. The effect of the Free Soil movement, led by men with not a tithe of his influence, upon the Compromise Bill, puts this beyond a question. Where was the Wilmot Proviso then? At the Springfield Convention a year ago, Mr. Webster laid claim to this as "his thunder." In the Marshfield speech he dates its origin as far back as 1787. A precocious Cyclops, truly, to be forging thunderbolts in his fifth year! If Mr. Webster should live till 1852, and his retrospective anti-slavery feeling go on increasing at its present ratio, he will tell us that he established the "Liberator" in 1831.

Beyond doubt it is an encouraging sign of the times that Northern politicians are endeavoring to fix the stigma of pro-slavery upon their opponents. The weathercocks, feeling themselves compelled to the

right-about, are assuring us that they have all along been laboring to produce so desirable a result, and that we owe the present prospect of clearer weather chiefly to their self-sacrificing exertions. Though no Abolitionist can feel satisfied with the Buffalo Platform, yet God forbid that we should not give our hearty encouragement to any party which is taking the first step toward a more honest life. To pay only the first cent in the dollar is better than a brazen fraudulent bankruptcy. As we said in our first hasty article upon the Buffalo Convention, it will be impossible for the Free Soil party to stop when they have once carried the points which they are now contending for. In regard to Slavery they will only have conquered a negative position and to preserve themselves from immediate dissolution they must assume an affirmative one. They must not only resist, but, in order to be free from the chance of another attack at the very first opportunity, they must invade the hostile territory and tear up those roots which supply sap to the war. Already they have made one move onward, and have avowed themselves Abolitionists to the extent of ten miles square.

It is very evident that at the conventions of the new party the minds of the people run on before those of the speakers, and frame logical conclusions to the premises at which they would stop short. The

farther the speaker ventures to go, the more sure he is of a hearty response on the part of his hearers. A fine abstract sentiment of freedom makes what the reporters call a *sensation*, a sharp thrust at the slave power will be applauded, but to bring down the house, Slavery itself must be denounced. "When I begin to see him blow red water," we once heard a whaler say, "then I feel good." So the people feel when they think the harpoon has reached a vital part of the monster Slavery. When they are told that it is a "wrong and a curse," and in the same breath are called upon to pledge themselves to let it alone, they are conscious of a decided *non sequitur*. Let us make a fable to illustrate it, founded on the Siamese Twins.

Once upon a time Chang took to bad courses. He frequented bar-rooms and even more disreputable places, and at last became an inveterate sot. Now wherever Chang went, of course Eng was seen also, and his character began to suffer accordingly. Nor was this all. Whatever diseases Chang contracted, Eng suffered his share of, not to mention that, though a cold-water man himself, his liver was being burnt up by the brandy which ran down his brother's throat. Eng consulted his spiritual adviser, and wished him to reason with Chang and represent to him the wickedness of his conduct. "It would not

do, my dear sir, it would not do at all. Mr. Chang is a member of my society and subscribes liberally for missions and other gospel purposes." Eng went to his lawyer. That gentleman merely laid his finger on the bond which held the two brothers together, and shook his head. In despair Eng sent for a surgeon. "I would not venture an operation, lest both parties bleed to death." One day Eng was sitting on the edge of the gutter into which his brother had tumbled, when a medical man, thought rather *ultra* by the faculty, came up. Eng looked at him despairingly. "Give him his choice, as soon as he is sober, to begin a reform to-morrow morning, or to submit to the knife at once. In a few months the operation will be necessary to save your life."

THE ATTITUDE OF THE RELIGIOUS PRESS

CHANCE has thrown in our way a stray number of the "Christian Observer," a religious newspaper published in Philadelphia, and devoted to the Presbyterian interest, though whether of the "Old" or "New" school we are not enough of a theologian to determine. As far as we are able to judge from the number before us, the paper is conducted with as much liberality as is consistent with its sectarian character. It contains a very fair account of the Woman's Rights Convention (though prefaced by a vulgar paragraph, evidently from another hand), and speaks of Abolitionists with a civility sufficiently rare in religious journals.

There are one or two articles in it on which we propose to make a few comments. Our leading text will be a letter from the Rev. Dr. Bullard of St. Louis, Missouri, who is anxious that committees of ecclesiastical bodies appointed to draw up reports upon the subject of Slavery should visit the South, and reside there three years at least, in order to

divest their minds of prejudice in the matter. The Doctor complains of the credulity of Abolitionists. Credulity we should be inclined to call an active faculty, rather than a mere passive quality, of the mind, since we see it every day diligently exerted in precisely the opposite manner from that which has alarmed Dr. Bullard, — for the swallowing, namely, of all kinds of pro-slavery fallacies and absurdities. But whether a faculty or a quality, we confess that we have not enough of it to believe that the days of an investigating committee would be very long in the land of Missouri. The initiatory steps of their pious enterprise would no doubt be agreeable enough. Probably Dr. Bullard would invite them to dinner. Perhaps some of his wealthier parishioners might do the same. And then we imagine them sallying forth, full of benevolence, to prosecute their inquiries among the "servants." We know not whether rail-roads are particularly plenty in Missouri; but we have a strong impression that there is a species of *impromptu* rail-carriage, a gratuitous conveyance, which is sometimes, with a too boisterous hospitality, even forced upon persons conducting investigations of the kind we are speaking of. We can fancy Dr. Bullard (who seems to be a kind-hearted man) walking beside the triumphal-car of his Northern friends, like Philip beside the chariot of the Ethiopian, but,

unlike Philip, modestly declining to share in so ostentatious an elevation, and exhorting them to take a calm and unprejudiced view of the country through which they were passing. It is only ten years since two persons had their ears cropped for entering into private conversation with "servants" in Dr. Bullard's own city of St. Louis; and we frankly admit that a committee of inquiry who went thither to obtain information on the subject of Slavery from anybody except the masters could afford an abbreviation in those organs as conveniently as anywhere else.

Dr. Bullard may flatter himself that his committee would be treated with respect on account of their cloth; but we cannot even leave him so small a ground for confidence as that. It was only the other day that a clergyman — and one, moreover, whom Providence had furnished with a full natural suit of the theological color — was sold in Kentucky, for fear he *might* possibly enter into conversation with that very class who are to form the subject of our supposed committee's investigations.

Dr. Bullard seems desirous to discuss the matter in a reasonable frame of mind, and we shall therefore endeavor to make a few suggestions for his reasoning faculty to exercise itself on. What objects would a committee propose to itself in making a

visit to Missouri? To convince itself of the odious *injustice* of Slavery? It seems to us that a journey of twelve or fourteen hundred miles is hardly necessary for that. Dr. B. virtually admits it in his own letter. Should the committee make its expedition, then, to obtain material for the chapter in its report devoted to *cruelty?* There are thirty thousand living instances of it (according to Mr. Burt of South Carolina) at this moment in Canada. Do men run away from kindness? Has Dr. B. himself any notion of taking flight from St. Louis? His parish must be careful that they do not make too much of him, or they may drive him to seek refuge in Canada West.

Our worthy Doctor would no doubt admit that there is no necessity for making any reports at all on what is termed the *abstract* question of Slavery. With our friend Mr. Hosea Biglow, he is probably

> "willin' a man should go tol'lable strong
> Agin wrong in the abstract, *for that kind o' wrong*
> *Is ollers unpop'lar and never gits pitied,*
> *It bein' a crime no one never committed;*"

but, like that gentleman also, he would add the qualifying remark, —

> "But he must n't be hard on partickiler sins,
> Cos that would be kickin' the people's own shins,"

which, as the Doctor's experience in the pulpit must have taught him, is an exercise less profitable than

exhilarating. We wish to bring this matter clearly before the mental eye of the Doctor, for whom, as an evidently amiable man, we have a sort of liking, if he will allow such a feeling on the part of an *ultra* Abolitionist. The Doctor, then, admits that "Slavery in the abstract" is a moral wrong. Now it is a universally conceded proposition that no institution is so perfect in practice as it is in theory. Slavery, then, being in theory wrong, must be we know not what in practice. The horns of a dilemma, we fear, are not so comfortable a refuge as those of the altar, to which theologians commonly fly when pursued by the justice of anti-slavery.

But our good Doctor complains (in a note) that, at any rate, Abolitionists are unapostolic in endeavoring to render the slaveholders *odious*. Whether we be so or not, our labor is at least entirely superfluous, for their very name saves us the trouble in advance. That the apostles never denounced Slavery is an argument like that by which Fielding's Newgate chaplain defended his fondness for punch, which liquor, he said, pleased him, "the more especially as it was nowhere spoken ill of in Scripture." If the Doctor can imagine Saint Peter attending an auction sale to purchase a "servant" who might look after his lines and nets while he himself was evangelizing, we believe that he

"Could hold a fire in his hand
By thinking of the frosty Caucasus."

Such questions as that of Slavery are not to be argued upon the narrow ground of isolated instances of cruelty and ferocity. It is condemned by a wider and easier process of induction. It dares not enter the court of conscience the world over. Even King Obi and King Boy acknowledge the wickedness of Slavery in the abstract. But the mass of men have not time for a process of reasoning based on purely ethical premises. In endeavoring to convince them that certain institutions produce certain fruit, it is easier to do it by plucking a specimen from the tree before their very eyes, than by any kind of analysis or synthesis. Moreover, the Doctor should remember that the cruelty is an integral part of the system, is necessarily fostered by it, and forms the first link of one chain of abstract reasoning against it. Now will the Doctor show us how it is possible to render a crime *odious*, and at the same time leave the criminal in an amiable and attractive light? Does it render the thugs and assassins less repulsive that their atrocities were perpetrated on system, and that the whole community partook in them?

We were so much diverted with the notion of Dr. Bullard's plan of a missionary committee, and the simplicity of mind displayed in the proposition had

such a charm for us, that we thought it might do no harm to open the horn-book of anti-slavery, and by dint of repeating frequently *that is A, that is B,* get him accustomed to the sight of one or two of the first letters.

There is an editorial article in the same paper in which the "New England Brethren" are called upon "to disseminate the principles of their Pilgrim Fathers over the wide and destitute fields of the Southwest." Now, a general court, composed wholly of flesh and blood Pilgrim Fathers, thought proper in 1645 "to write to Mr. Williams (understanding that the negroes which Captain Smyth brought were fraudulently and injuriously taken and brought from Guinea), that he forthwith send the negro which he had of Captain Smyth hither, that he may be sent home; which this court do resolve to send back without delay." Inelegant in expression, but sufficiently to the point. So also in 1649, among the laws enacted for the punishing of capital crimes is this: "10. If any man stealeth man or mankind, he shall surely be put to death. — Exodus xxi. 16." These are clearly not the Pilgrim Fathers of Fourth of July orations and religious editorials, but an altogether more substantial and uncomfortable kind. Setting aside for the moment our feelings in regard to capital punishment, we should agree with the

"Christian Observer" in liking to have the seed of this variety of the Mayflower scattered pretty liberally in the Southwest. But we have our fears that the second detachment of Pilgrim-Fatherhood would find the trees of the aboriginal forest in that section of the country hung with very strange fruit.

As for other points in the editorial aforesaid, we will allow them, and certain propositions put forth in the front of another article of the same paper, to perform quietly for each other the office of Kilkenny cats, without any interference on our part. The article referred to is signed "S. C.," and the editor in another column commends it to the attention of his readers. It commences with the following paragraph, to the sentiments of which we give hearty assent:

Mr. Editor, — If to commit a wrong is censurable, it is not less so to perpetuate it. "The partaker is as bad as the thief." So says the law of the land. So says the word of God. Paul was careful to urge upon his younger brother in the ministry the exercise of the strictest caution in this matter. "Lay hands suddenly on no man," he tells Timothy, "neither be a partaker of other men's sins; keep thyself pure." As saith the poet, —

"He who allows oppression shares the crime."

"THE CONQUERORS OF THE NEW WORLD AND THEIR BONDSMEN"

This is the title of a historical work, the first volume of which has just been published in London. It is the beginning of an intended complete history of Slavery, and, though the author has brought his narrative down only as far as the year 1512, is interesting as showing the small seed from which this deadly Upas-tree has sprung. Thinking that our readers will be interested in following the author in his course, we shall note the chief matters which have struck us in reading the book, preserving the order of chronology.

The first slaves brought from Africa in modern times were ten negroes, whom in the year 1442 Antonio Gonçalvez obtained in exchange for two Moors. These Moors, who were always looked upon as legitimate plunder, had been seized by Gonçalvez upon the coast of Africa, he having been sent out by Prince Henry of Portugal on a voyage of discovery. Soon after (1474) we find that a trade in negro slaves had grown up. African slaves had by this

time, we are told, become very numerous in Seville. These "were treated very kindly, . . . being allowed to keep their dances and festivals, and one of them was named mayoral of the rest, *who protected them as against their masters and before the courts of law*, and also settled their private quarrels." Under date 1474 is a letter from Ferdinand and Isabella "to a celebrated negroe, Quan de Valladolid, commonly called the Negro Count," nominating him to this office. Among other passages in this letter is the following: "Because we know your sufficiency, ability, and good disposition, we constitute you mayoral and judge," etc. It is tolerably evident that Ferdinand and Isabella had but a limited knowledge of those nicer proprieties which regulate the conduct of republicans toward persons of different complexion. Moreover it would appear that the inherent incapacity for self-protection theory had not yet been broached, for we find here a black man not only allowed to take care of himself, but appointed to the charge of others. We would not deal too hardly with their Catholic majesties for their shortcomings in these particulars, it being above three hundred years since they have been dead, and perhaps (if interfering with the designs of Providence in the case of Ham be anything) something worse.

All along during these first years of the slave-trade, the ostensible chief motive of the persons in power who encouraged it was the eternal salvation of the Africans. And we can easily believe them to be sincere without supposing any very prodigious amount of benevolence on their part. The truth is, that in most cases, probably, their charity began at home and tarried there. These good people believed (and that was an age when people believed what they did believe with considerable thoroughness) that they were thus making large deposits to stand in their names on the creditor side of the ledger of the Bank of Heaven, to be drawn on as happened to be convenient. If funds of this sort could be accumulated by sprinkling a score or two of Africans with holy water, and converting them from a mumbo-jumbo which they understood to one they did not understand, it was excellent pay considering the amount of work. Perhaps, as the importation of Africans increased, the ceremonial of sprinkling was performed wholesale on large numbers at once, by means of some kind of engine for the purpose, an economical proceeding somewhat similar to which we remember to have heard of in Georgia some two years ago. There is no doubt that this pious wish of getting the Africans baptized entered largely into the plans of those who encouraged the slave

trade. The same argument (without the same faith) is urged upon us now by some persons of tender (or at least soft and pliable) consciences. It is truly refreshing to meet with a piece of stupidity whose origin we can distinctly trace, and which we thereby find to be only a little above three hundred years old. Generally we can follow them back as far as we have any historical record or even any legend, everywhere ready to get in the way of every new reformer and projector. We are thankful to find a comparatively young one, and to be able to realize that there were many long ages unvexed by it.

A contemporary chronicler, who was an eyewitness of the partition of some cargoes of slaves brought to Portugal in 1444, has left upon record a very simple and affecting narrative of it. We copy a few passages. The writer, Azurara, begins by praying God to forgive his tears, inasmuch as his human nature would get the better of his conscientious satisfaction at the eternal gain which was to repay these poor creatures for such bitter suffering. "But what heart was that, how hard soever, which was not pierced with sorrow, seeing that company. For some had sunken cheeks and their faces bathed in tears, looking at each other. Others were groaning very dolorously, looking at the heights of the heavens, fixing their eyes upon them, crying out loudly,

as if they were asking succor from the Father of nature. Others struck their faces with their hands, throwing themselves on the earth. *Others made their lamentation in songs, according to the customs of their country*, which, although we could not understand their language, we saw corresponded well with the height of their sorrow; but now, for the increase of their grief, came those who had the charge of the distribution and began to put them apart one from the other in order to equalize the portions. Wherefore it was necessary to part children and parents, husbands and wives, and brethren from each other. Neither, in the partition of friends and relations, was any law kept, only each fell where the lot took him. . . . Who will be able to make the partition without great difficulty? For while they are placing in one part the children, that saw their parents in another, they sprang up perseveringly and fled to them. The mothers enclosed their children in their arms, and threw themselves with them on the ground, receiving wounds with little pity for their own flesh, so that their children might not be torn from them." The good Azurara, who clearly has something more than a mere apparatus of *systole* and *diastole* in his bosom, saw deeper into this matter of *the songs* than most modern observers. Nor does he fail to notice that the suffer-

ings of these lambs, thrown, as it were, over the walls into the fold, found sympathy in the unadulterated human instincts of the Portuguese crowd who witnessed them.

That picture was painted four hundred and four years ago! The simple chronicler had some art to make his colors stand wonderfully fresh and vivid. It was because he used a ground of simple human feeling, we fancy. But think of it! for now nearly *half a thousand years* have these things been going on, only growing more and more cruel. Here is a picture which we should like to see hung in the parlor of the pious and kindhearted slaveholder, who makes it a principle not to part families, that he might see what would take place if it were to be said to him, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee." We suspect that Azurara would hardly have voted for General Taylor.

In the accounts of the early voyages to the African coast, we have some scattered notices of the natives, which show that they were vastly better off then than after four hundred years of intercourse with white men and Christians. The first voyager who left a written diary of what he did and saw was Ca Da Mosto, whose expedition was made in 1454. He says of the people on the south side of the Senegal River, that "they are exceeding black, tall, cor-

pulent, and well made. . . . Both men and women wash themselves four or five times a day, being very cleanly as to their persons, but not so in eating, in which they observe no rule. Although very ignorant and awkward in going about anything which they have not been accustomed to, yet in their own business, which they are acquainted with, they are as expert as any European can be. They are full of words and never have done talking, and are for the most part liars and cheats. Yet, on the other hand, they are very charitable, for they give a dinner or a night's lodging and a supper to all strangers who come to their houses, without expecting any return. . . . They are extremely bold and fierce, choosing rather to be killed than to save their lives by flight. They are not afraid to die, nor scared, as other people are, when they see a companion slain."

The discovery that in these people was the connecting link between man and the baboon was reserved for later times and more scientific observers. Ca Da Mosto finds them well made, cleanly and hospitable, great liars (we imagine that *he* was not very explicit in unfolding his violent baptismal designs in regard to them), brave and contemptuous of death. No hint as yet of any peculiar *odor* by which they were distinguished. This particular mark of inferiority is discernible only to persons of very refined

sensibilities and to vulgar ruffians reeking of rum and tobacco. Perhaps some information on the subject might be obtained from certain four-legged canine fellow soldiers of the modern Cincinnatus. It is curious, by the way, that this olfactory stigma has been affixed to other oppressed races. It was formerly one of the apologies for maltreating the Jews. Sir Thomas Browne considers it with becoming gravity in his vulgar errors, and concludes that "if we concede a national unsavoriness in any people, yet shall we find the Jews less subject hereto than any."

Ca Da Mosto sailed down the coast eight hundred miles to the southward of the Senegal and visited the country of a negro, King Budomel, who received him courteously. This Budomel seems to have been not altogether without some prudent and statesmanlike reflections on matters of religion, for he informed Da Mosto "that he looked upon the religion of the Europeans to be good, for that none but God could have given them so much riches and understanding." He seems also to have had some glimpses of the doctrine of compensation, declaring "that he believed the negroes were more sure of salvation than the Christians, because God was a just Lord, and, therefore, as he had given the latter paradise in this world, it ought to be possessed in the world to come by the negroes, who had scarce anything here in comparison

of the others." It is gratifying to us as palefaces to think that, however much of truth there might have been in these royal speculations at that time, the two races have been put more upon a footing of equality by the advantages of religious instruction which the colored people have had afforded them.

It appears that as early as 1484, facilities were offered for christianizing Africa without so costly an expedient as a Colonization Society, or so cruel a one as carrying the natives thousands of miles to make slaves of them. In that year Congo was discovered by Diego Cam, who, at the request of the king of that country, took back with him to Portugal some of the sons of the principal men to be baptized and instructed in the Christian faith. In the same year the King of Benin sent ambassadors to the King of Portugal, requesting that priests might be sent to him.

About the same time, also, a negro prince, named Bemoin, came to Portugal seeking assistance against a usurper by whom he had been ousted from his throne. The description of him is interesting. Nothing about natural inferiority thus far. "Bemoin, because he was a man of large size and fine presence, about forty years old, with a long and well arranged beard, appeared, indeed, not like a barbarous pagan, but as one of our own princes, to whom all honor

and reverence were due. With like majesty and gravity of demeanor he commenced and finished his oration. . . . And, taking leave of the King, he went to kiss the Queen's hand, and then that of the prince, to whom he said a few words, at the end of which he prayed the prince that he would intercede in his favor with the King. And thence he was accompanied to his lodgings by all the notibility that accompanied him." The attendants of Bemoin are spoken of by the same historian as "gentelemen."

We shall continue our extracts in some future paper, and follow the progress of *christianization* to the West Indies. We shall there find the system of slavery becoming gradually more and more firmly and openly established, accompanied always with the most disastrous results both to the enslaver and his victim, demoralizing the one and destroying the other. For it is only in entering the service of the Devil that men are willing to pay a high price for the "situation."

"THE CONQUERORS OF THE NEW WORLD AND THEIR BONDSMEN"

SECOND NOTICE

THE story of Columbus, no matter how often repeated, can never lose the freshness of its interest; so happily are the ideal and the real blended in it. The inspired faith of the great discoverer, sailing, as his sailors imagined, down the huge western slope of the world up which there could be no return, and the splendid tangible result, are such as can never be repeated. It is only by solitary voyages across purely ideal oceans that new worlds can be discovered now. But the Columbus of such continents can send back no feather-cinctured islanders, no fruits and plants to convince the unbelieving, and it is only in the very few that the record of his trials and his constancy excites deep emotion. But Columbus stands entirely alone. Only he was inspired by Faith and not Hope; only he left an unbelieving and not an expectant world behind him.

The great Genoese, like other original discover-

ers, was a fanatic. His zealous faith, turned in whatever direction, has the same intensity and leaps over all intermediate and subordinate particulars to the result. One chief object which he proposed to himself in exploring what he supposed would be a shorter passage to Indies was that, in this way, an army might be conducted by an easier route to Jerusalem, to prosecute a new Crusade. Could Columbus have had a prophetic vision of the horrible fleet, freighted with its cargoes of festering humanity, that was to follow in his track, could he have known that those chains which were brought back with his ashes from Spain to St. Domingo were emblematic of the cruel slavery which his magnificent enterprise entailed upon the hemisphere he discovered, perhaps he would have died in Genoa, known only as a dreamer to a few intimates.

Columbus found in Hispaniola a race of simple and happy islanders, nearer to the Jesus of whom they had never heard than was that Christendom to whom the uncomprehended legacy of the gospel has been bequeathed. They had Christianity in all but the name, and Columbus brought them the cross. He himself says of them, "I knew they were people that would deliver themselves better to the Christian faith, and be converted more through love than by force." Yet Columbus with his own hand sowed

the fatal seed from which sprang the horrible system of slavery. Let us not be too hasty in judging him. The truth is that he was so absorbed in ulterior objects, so desirous of convincing Ferdinand and Isabella that the new world he had given them would bring a revenue to Spain, that men were either wholly disregarded by him, or looked upon merely as the pawns upon the great chessboard where he was playing his game with the eyes of all Europe upon him.

As long as Isabella lived, though she was probably more sincerely anxious than any one else for the christianization and the consequent salvation of the natives of her new possessions, her woman's heart instinctively recoiled from any attempt, however daintily veiled, to enslave them. Amid eager, steelclad adventurers "who hid the avaricious heart under the red cross," and cunning cowled marauders lusting for spiritual dominion, with what a gracious light does her image seem invested, covering her poor islanders with the wings of her womanly instinct! Let us give one more passage in which Columbus bears his testimony to the disposition of the natives, and then see to what account the Christians turned it. "They are a loving and uncovetous people, so docile in all things, that I assure your Highness that I believe in all the world there is not

a better people or a better country. They love their neighbors as themselves, and they have the sweetest and gentlest way of talking in the world, and always with a smile."

The first step toward the establishment of Slavery was the division of the Indians into what we called *repartimientos*. Under this system a certain number of natives were *bound out*, so to speak, to different colonists, either to be worked on the farms or in the mines. The time of this compulsory service was limited, and the poor creatures were to work under the direction of their *caciques*. This was slavery in everything but the name, and it was not long before the Indians came to be considered as chattels. No matter what the system, the most horrible cruelties were perpetrated, especially at the mines. And it is worth remarking, at a time when we have been "acquiring" territory, a part of which is said to contain mines of gold and silver, that the miners in these first Spanish settlements became invariably beggars.

A curious story is told of the notion which one of the Caciques named Hatney had of the Deity worshipped by the Spaniards. "Calling his people together, and recounting the cruelties of the Spaniards, he said that they did all these things for a great lord whom they loved much, which lord he

would now show to them. Forthwith he produced a small basket filled with gold. 'Here is the lord whom they serve and after whom they go!'"

We need not trace the gradual steps by which slavery was introduced, nor dwell upon the cruelties of the Spaniards. These last are already branded with an infamous notoriety, and were not so much exceptional as necessary incidents to the system. But it will be interesting to see how these things impressed the lookers-on, and especially what course was taken by the clergy as the spiritual guides of the perpetrators of them. There were in Hispaniola about fifteen Dominican Monks, living under the government of their vicar, Peter de Cordova. Remembering that these men belonged to the order whom Protestants know chiefly as the founders of the inquisition, and seeing them actuated by the purest and most devoted humanity, we shall arrive at the conclusion with which Dr. King sums up his epitaph on George II. and be satisfied that they "*neque deos, nec lupos fuisse, sed homines.*"

Having satisfied themselves of the cruelty with which the natives were treated, they "determined that their protest should express the general opinion of their body; and they accordingly agreed upon a discourse to be preached before the inhabitants of St. Domingo, and signed their names to it." They

chose one of their members, Brother Antonio Montesino, to preach it — "a man of great asperity in reproving vice." They also, in order to ensure a full church, caused it to be given out that a discourse particularly concerning the inhabitants was to be delivered on the next Sabbath. In short, they obtained the use of the cathedral, and advertised the first Anti-slavery lecture. We have no report of Father Antonio's sermon. We only know that he "declared with very piercing and terrible words, that the Voice pronounced that they were living in mortal sin." Our author supposes that the discourse might have ended somewhat as did the first sermon of Vieyra in St. Luiz, 1653, which he quotes from Southey's "History of Brazil." "But you will say to me, this people, this republic, this state, cannot be supported without Indians. Who is to bring us a pitcher of water, or a bundle of wood? Who is to plant our Mandioc? Must our wives do it? Must our children do it? (Hear this, Messrs. Clay and Calhoun.) In the first place, as you will presently see, these are not the straits in which I would place you; but if necessity and conscience require it, then, I say, yes! and I repeat it, yes! you and your wives and your children ought to do it! We ought to support ourselves with our own hands; for better is it to be supported by the sweat of one's own

brow than by another's blood. Oh ye riches of Maranham, what if these cloaks and mantles were to be wrung? They would drop blood."

But whatever Father Antonio's words were, they produced their effect. It seems as if we were reading a story of to-day, except for the constancy of the preacher. The inhabitants met together, resolved that the Father must retract, and sent a deputation to convey their resolution to the monastery, and to say that if the monks preached such "*delirious things*," they had better return to Spain at once. After a long parley, the committee left with the assurance that the matter should be touched upon in the next Sabbath's discourse, as they supposed with an ample apology. But Father Antonio had a conscience. He repeated his former statements and reproofs and only urged them the more earnestly.

The result was that the aggrieved inhabitants sent out a Franciscan (Alonso de Espinal) to make complaints in Spain. On the other hand, the Dominicans sent out Father Antonio as their ambassador. The result was that the earnest Antonio converted his rival into an ally, and a body of laws was established for the protection of the Indians, and the regulation of their affairs. But it was too late. It is nevertheless interesting to read of any benevolent effort, even if unsuccessful, and we learn

from this story that the Catholic clergy in the early part of the sixteenth century did not consider it out of their province to interfere between master and slave.

With the passage of this body of laws, the volume before us ends, having brought the history down to the period when the rapid extinction of the Indians began to make it necessary to import fresh victims from Africa.

CALLING THINGS BY THEIR RIGHT NAMES

The excellent Brother Anselm was the fortunate occupant of one of the most uncomfortable caverns in the Thebaid. Exposed to the rain during the wet season and to the sun during the dry, not a day passed which did not add to the hermit's claims upon an eternally blissful hereafter. He had so reduced himself by fastings and flagellations, and had become so dry and brown by exposure, that there was no farther step left to him unless from being a living mummy to being a dead one. A zealous Homo-ousian, he had not only confuted, but assisted in burning, several Homoi-ousian heretics, an operation easily performed with men whose piety consisted in rendering themselves conveniently sapless. It may be supposed that so eminent an example of devotion would not be without disciples, and among those none was more ardent than Brother Theodoric. This Theodoric was a worthy hermit from whom no perseverance in mortification could expel a tendency to adipocere, and upon whom the extraordinary

tenuity of the holy Anselm consequently made a deeper and more venerable impression.

Anselm, having little farther to do with his own sins, had a great deal of time to devote to those of other people, and, having long considered with himself the various atrocities perpetrated in different parts of the world, came at last to the conclusion that there was nothing so altogether revolting to human nature as the practice of cannibalism.

For many years he revolved the matter in his cavern, till he became so possessed by it that he could talk and think of little beside, and his fellow hermits, who agreed about nothing else, became unanimous upon one point, namely, that Brother Anselm was crazy and a bore. As his orthodoxy was above suspicion, and his hallucination not of a kind which would warrant them in making a bonfire of him at once, and so getting him peaceably out of the way, they were rejoiced when he announced to them one day that he felt a movement of the spirit to go upon a mission to the Cannibal Islands, and accordingly encouraged him in his pious design, and assisted him to set forth in the prosecution of it. Theodoric, whose fatter and more sluggish nature was slowly penetrated by impulses, but in which impressions once made were exceedingly durable, was not yet ready to accompany his master.

After passing through a great many perilous adventures, in his escape from which Anselm recognized the manifest finger of Providence, he arrived at the sphere of his enterprise. He found that the inhabitants of the Islands had not been belied, but, though burning with indignation and zeal, he resolved to master their language thoroughly before commencing his labors as a reformer. This occupied the greater part of a year, during which time he was treated with kindness and hospitality by the natives, who were, perhaps, induced to contribute to his sustenance by an economical forethought of some future feast at which he should passively, rather than actively, assist. However this may be, these civilities and attentions insensibly softened the mind of the apostle toward the objects of his mission, and the constant sight of the odious practice against which he came to preach robbed it by little and little of the vividness of its horror.

Being at length perfectly accomplished in the language of the country, he proposed to make a public delivery of his testimony, and for this purpose selecting a day of public rejoicing, he interrupted the festivities of the chief market-place by a cogent appeal to the throng of revellers upon the sin of man-eating. He was immediately seized by the enraged populace, who, after a consultation in

which it was voted that he was too lean for any purpose of practical utility, resolved to carry him before the King.

If Anselm had been asked for his conception of this potentate, while he was yet tossing about on shipboard, he would doubtless have drawn a not very flattering imaginative likeness, in which the peculiar expression of the hyena and the ghoul would have been blended in tolerably equal proportions. But his residence in the principal island of his majesty's possessions had cleared his mind of many erroneous preconceptions, and he was not, therefore, surprised when, after some preliminaries of etiquette, he was ushered into the presence of a middle-aged man of refined and intelligent features, and uncommonly prepossessing address.

The fervor of the missionary had been not a little roused by some of the rather boisterous attentions of the mob, and, accordingly, no sooner did he find himself in the royal presence, than he gave vent to his suppressed indignation in a diatribe against man-eating, in which sacred majesty itself was not spared. The courteous monarch waited with an air of polite but unconvinced attention until the missionary had fully relieved himself of his testimony, and then signified his intention of conversing with him in private. Anselm was rather annoyed at

the wholly unruffled manner of the King, who had that polish of character from which reproofs and uncomfortable suggestions slipped off like rain from a duck's back.

When they were alone together, his majesty remarked with a gracious smile, "*We* always call it *mutton*, as our ancestors have done from time immemorial."

"But it *is* man's flesh, nevertheless, and it makes no difference what you call it. You may throw dust in the eyes of conscience, but you cannot impose upon God."

"Excuse me, excellent sir, but it *does* make a difference. Hereditary sins, heirlooms of barbarism, in short, atrocities to which we have been educated, cannot be looked upon in the light of *abstract* wickedness."

Anselm had been too long a theologian not to love a quibble with all his heart, but, after a moment's reflection, he replied, "We are always trifling with ourselves and compromising with our vices, when we cease to call things by their right names. The spirit of the Lord hath sent me hither to be as the voice of one crying in the wilderness against the hideous iniquity of — of — "

Here the missionary was staggered by an expression of polite deprecation in the countenance of the

King, who quickly added with a bland smile, "mutton-eating. My dear sir, things *are* to us precisely what they *seem* to us. The practice which you so ably and eloquently reprehend (allow me to say) has become, as it were, a part of our social system. A sudden change would be productive of the most alarming results. In the first place, our prisoners of war, if we ceased to dispose of them in the way which both we and they consider inevitable, would become very dangerous members of society. Accustomed to expect nothing but the tin-kitchen and the dredging-box, and thrown upon their own resources for employment, they would become turbulent and fill our now peaceful dominions with excesses and insurrections. These social changes (which I grant to be desirable) must be brought about gradually, by persons familiar with our position and our habits of thought, and, indeed, identified with them. Now, I have a proposition to make to you which, I trust, will receive your mature consideration. After a careful examination of different religious systems, I have become satisfied that Christianity is best adapted to secure the permanence of a paternal despotism like our own. It preserves this world to those who have it now, and provides another world for those whose share of this is limited. The upper classes retain those privileges and luxuries which

long habit has rendered necessary to them, and the masses get that invaluable boon — religion. I am anxious to have this admirable system introduced here as it is practised in Christendom. We have no established system of orthodoxy. You have a ready-made one to dispose of. To be the means of converting a whole people would be something after your own heart. You shall be my Pontiff and Minister of Public Religion, with an establishment suited to your rank. It is seldom that the propagandist has such an occasion offered to him."

"But Christianity is utterly incompatible with the eating of — of — mutton," stammered Anselm.

"All in good time," replied the King. "As one of ourselves, you will have opportunities of effecting reform which would be entirely denied to you if you attempted to work from without. Indeed, it is your only chance, for, if you decline my proposition, the executioner is in readiness, and this glorious opportunity must await some wiser and less headstrong evangelist."

"Allow me three days to consider," pleaded Anselm. The three days were granted.

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Let us now return to the Thebaid, where, after six years had gone by, the spirit of missionary enterprise had at length pierced through to the heart

of Brother Theodoric. In spite of every species of maceration, growing daily plumper than ever, and having a fixed idea that the gate of heaven was only wide enough to admit living skeletons, he looked with increasing horror at the round and top-like shadow which his irreligious person cast upon the smooth white sand of the desert. He began to think that his obesity was a judgment upon him for having allowed the sainted Anselm to undertake his holy enterprise alone. Becoming at last fully persuaded that this theory was the true one, he resolved to follow in the steps of his friend and spiritual father. He accordingly embarked, and after a short and prosperous voyage arrived at the Cannibal Islands. Unable to make himself intelligible in words, he expressed as well as he could by signs his disgust at the *cuisine* of the natives. He was perhaps over-desirous of the crown of martydom, and was certainly in a fair way to obtain it. He was not much of a casuist, and made no nice distinctions as to the precise manner or occasion of his roasting, it being sufficient for his purposes if the ceremony were gone through with, no matter to what end.

In the mean time Anselm was rapidly earning the enviable title of Apostle to the Cannibal Islanders. He had convinced himself that his majesty was right and that men must be approached gently and tenderly,

and that as sovereign Pontiff his sphere of usefulness and his opportunity for introducing reforms would be incalculably enlarged. Accordingly, he did his best to view things from a Cannibal Island point of view, and finally succeeded so entirely that he found an authority in Scripture for what he mildly called *their most striking peculiarity*. This authority was not other than a passage in relation to certain devourers of widows and orphans, by applying to which the rules of interpretation he had become familiar with in his Homo-ousian controversies, he produced most extraordinary results, which had a very favorable influence in preparing the minds of the Islanders for the reception of the Gospel truths. A custom sanctioned by Scripture was of course a thing to be commended rather than preached against, and it was not long before the zealous Pontiff discovered that the present state of things was the best that could be devised for all parties. He even preached a discourse in the public prison urging it upon the victims confined there (many of whom had been converted by his labors) that it was their duty as Christians to be as *tender* as possible, and not, by wicked and carnal toughness, to carry their revenge even beyond the confines of the dripping-pan, where all private animosities should cease forever.

Now, as in other countries, Princes and Great

Nobles have forests in which the game is preserved, so did the chief persons in the Cannibal Islands have certain perquisites in regard to their peculiar kind of *mutton*, and it so happened that the extraordinarily fine sheep Theodoric fell to the share of the Head of the Church. That eminent and godly man had now reached the point he so earnestly desired. He was in all respects identified with the people he had converted, looked at all objects precisely as they did, and was consequently now ready to commence reformer with reasonable hopes of success. But, curiously enough, the nearer he approached the long-desired position, the fewer grew the objects of reform, till, when it was fairly reached, he could see absolutely nothing which seemed to him in need of amendment.

Over the subsequent history of Theodoric we must draw a veil. Only the Pontiff, in a discourse wherein he set forth the providential fact that blessings were equally distributed over all parts of the world, so that a deprivation was pretty sure to be balanced by some corresponding advantage, used the following illustration — "How else," exclaimed he, with impressive unction, "shall we account for the circumstance that the arid waste of the Thebaid produces mutton of such size and flavor?"

PRO-SLAVERY LOGIC

If, as it has been often said, America be a kind of posterity in relation to Europe, it will follow that Europe must in some sense be a past to us. Now, although it be proverbial that men do not profit by the experience of the past, yet it seems worth the while to call their attention to it while it is being acted on a contemporaneous stage.

As the world, geologically considered, presents several different periods of development existing side by side, so, if we look at it ethnologically, we shall find that different parts of it exhibit at this very moment nearly all the several stages of societary advancement, as if to aid us in the study of those social problems which more and more usurp the attention of the age. One would think that those who will not read Fourier might, at least, spell out a line or two in the open volume of the world.

It would be impossible even to enter upon the consideration of topics so vast and so various within the compass of a single article. All that we propose is to draw the attention of our readers to a single

point which has attracted our own notice, and which has a bearing upon that subject to which our reformatory efforts are more especially devoted. Though chattel slavery be the most odious shape in which oppression presents itself, it is well for us to be accustomed to consider the abolition of it, not as an end, but as a step toward a more perfect reorganization of society.

At the time when the election of a slaveholder to the Chief Magistracy renders it almost certain that Congress will pass a new Compromise bill extending slavery into vast territories at present free from its blasting influence, it is well to look at some of the remoter and more general consequences likely to ensue from such an act of desperate wickedness. It is true that some eloquent political orators, with their throats hardly yet clear from the gulping swallow of their former professions of principle, tell us that the condition of the slave is improved in exact proportion as the institution of slavery is diffused over a larger surface. This is a point which we shall not stop to consider, holding it for certain that the condition of a *slave* can never be improved. As far as Slavery is concerned, the Free States (some of them) are as far advanced as England was in 1772 when the case of Somerset was decided. They are decidedly less enlightened than the judicial tribunals of England were

four centuries before, when it was held that a serf established his title to freedom by his ability to escape from the power of his lord. The position of the Free States in this respect reminds us of an anecdote related by Northcote, the painter, of an old German musician who had undertaken the arduous task of teaching his gracious majesty George the Third to play on the violin. The King having asked his instructor for an opinion of his proficiency, the adroit courtier satisfied at once his conscience and his dread of giving offence by furnishing his pupil with the following certificate: "May it please your Majesty, there are three classes of violin-players. There are those who play very well, those who play very badly, and those who cannot play at all. It affords me unbounded gratification to certify that the talent and commendable application of your Majesty has enabled you to reach the second class." In the same way there are three kinds of lovers of freedom, — those who encourage it as much as they can, those who encourage it as little as they can, and those who do not encourage it at all. It is gratifying to be able to say that the Free States have already advanced to the second class.

But the circumstance which we wished to bring to the notice of our readers in the present article — and it is one whose relation to the question of

Slavery is very apparent — is this: that the struggle which is now convulsing Europe is of a dual nature, resulting from the effort of races to establish their national individuality, and of classes to acquire privileges long unjustly denied, or to retain those as long and as unjustly usurped. The latter is unquestionably that in which the lover of his race will take the deepest interest, and which is likely to produce the most lasting and important results; but at the same time it cannot escape attention that the former is characterized by even a deeper bitterness of animosity.

When the news of the Parisian insurrection of June reached this country, we denied, *a priori*, that it was a movement of the dregs of the people, and preferred to agree with those who considered it as the unwise effort against reaction of men convinced of the rottenness of the existing condition of things. A statistical return has just been made of 3,423 insurgents recently transported, in which they are classed according to their ages and professions. Among these convicts are 7 literary men, 2 lawyers, 1 physician, 2 engineers, 2 chemists, 3 schoolmasters, 3 medical students, 1 law student, 8 bookkeepers, 2 reporters, 36 historical painters, 8 architects, 29 sculptors, and 5 booksellers. The instances sufficiently sustain the view we then took. They

show the widely extended nature of the dissatisfaction, and also that when matters have reached that crisis which renders a social revolution inevitable, the armies of the extremest left will be recruited from nearly all ranks of society. Meanwhile these violent attempts, though they seem to aid the very reaction they are intended to stay, give point and force to the arguments of the peaceful reorganizers, and bring converts to their doctrines.

Let us now glance for a moment at the causes which foster and keep alive the spirit of Race, and prevent assimilation among the distinct families of Man. It needs not to look very far. It is among the conquered and the oppressed that the traditions of race are most fondly cherished and most pertinaciously clung to. In proportion as their condition is worse their imagination loves to go back to the past, and to picture a former state as happy as their present one is degraded. If there be no authentic foundation for this legendary greatness (as among the Jews), they will create for themselves a fictitious pristine grandeur which has to them all the substance of reality. It is hope reversed, and exercising itself in the past instead of the future. As instances of the fact that *race* most strongly influences those living in a state of subjection, we need only mention the Jews, the Poles, and the Irish. Where all are

admitted to equal privileges, these imaginary boundary-lines are very rapidly obliterated. French will be spoken in Canada long after it has become a dead language in Louisiana.

In making an application of these facts to the institution of slavery in the United States, we wish to leave the moral aspect of the case out of view altogether. We prefer to consider it as universally admitted that Slavery is a wrong and a sin, in the closest and most reproachful application of those two words. Let us see what Slavery will gain (regarded only as a social phenomenon) by extension over a wider surface.

The condition, not only of the American slave, but of the colored man in America, is such as preserves in their sharpest completeness the dividing lines of both race and class. The causes, therefore, which are now producing anarchy in Europe may be expected to combine in bringing about yet more shocking results here. By extending what is called the Area of Freedom, the increase of the servile population will be accelerated, while (since the presence of Slavery acts as an effectual bar to the influx of free settlers) the class of oppressors is scattered over a larger surface and can accordingly concentrate less easily for purposes of coercion or defence. It will not do to argue too strongly from the docility

and affectionateness of the African temperament, for the history of Haiti, written in letters of fire and blood, will confute any such course of reasoning.

It is an admitted fact, also, that African slavery presses with a nearly equal degrading influence upon the nonslaveholding whites as upon the slave, and we quoted from the list of the Parisian insurgents chiefly to show that, when social disorganization has reached a certain point, there is a natural union of all except the highest class, not only against that highest class, but against the system whose necessary tendency is to divide men at last into a highest and lowest with no intermediate grade.

Though our American slaves are cut off as much as possible from every avenue of instruction, yet it is impossible to prevent a certain gradual diffusion of intelligence among them, the more especially as a large class (those employed as domestics) are brought into immediate contact with a higher order of refinement and education. The necessity, therefore, of immediate emancipation grows stronger every day, and step by step with it advances the danger of insurrection. The further extension of Slavery, degrading as it would be to us as a nation, would nevertheless we think hasten the day of its forcible extinction by exactly as much as it put off the hope of peaceful

emancipation. There is no way in which injustice can fortify itself long. Not only are there enemies within the citadel, but its own improvidence will sooner or later starve it out.

IRISH AND AMERICAN PATRIOTS

The recent decision of the English Government not to allow the sentences of Mr. O'Brien and his fellow patriots to be carried into execution shows an advance of public sentiment in regard to capital punishment which we cannot but regard as of considerable significance. It is no proof of the humanity of the government, but only an evidence that they felt that so barbarous and shocking an exhibition would not do. It was not that the punishment seemed too grave for the offence, for, however the English might profess to look upon the rebellion as a farce, the preparations they made to suppress it show that it was a very serious matter to them. The simple truth is that this exhibition of public revenge was to take place on a scaffold lofty enough to attract the eyes of all England. It is just as bad and just as disgusting to strangle John Brown as Mr. Smith O'Brien, only in Brown's case the public do not have their attention drawn that way.

But beside the feeling of disgust that a refined

woman, brought up decently, and acting as a representative of a great nation, should be called upon to sign a warrant for the choking, disembowelling, and hacking in pieces of half a dozen helpless men, there was probably a vague and half-acknowledged perception of the abstract injustice of the sentence. Should the English people murder in cold blood these men whom they had deliberately made rebels of? Before the outbreak of the late Irish Revolt, we expressed our opinion of the entire futility of any attempt at a forcible redress of the wrongs of Ireland. But not the less on this account do we feel for those wrongs and sympathize with the men who, no matter how abortively or unwisely, have striven to remedy them. Efforts like theirs must be judged by the intention rather than by the event, and though they may not be permitted to seal their devotion with their blood, they have a right to the title of martyrs in the cause of freedom.

The tone of the English press, even of the Liberal part of it (with few exceptions), has been absolutely brutal in regard to the affairs of Ireland. It has always been one of John Bull's many boasts that he never struck an enemy who was down. But Smith O'Brien and Meagher have been assailed by a downright mob of journalists, and pelted with every derisive epithet in the vocabulary of hatred and contempt.

To the solid Englishman, altogether too heavy to be lifted off the ground by enthusiasm, nothing is so terrible as ridicule, and accordingly the whole aim of British journalism has been to render the Irish movement ridiculous. The last thing that John Bull gets an understanding of is the character of a neighbor, and he accordingly thinks that the Irishman is to be cured by the same medicine which is so effectual in his own case. John knows how absurd it would be to attempt to carry away the House of Lords by a flourish about Runnymede, or to rouse the enthusiasm of the Commons by a burst of eloquence on the subject of Naseby or Worcester, and so he applies the same rule to his neighbor across the Channel. It seems not to occur to him to consider whether, as the blame of Ireland's misery lies chiefly at his own door, it would not be possible for him to discover the means of remedy.

We could hardly believe our eyes when we read in the London "Examiner" a serious proposal to maintain a fleet upon the Irish coast for the reception of loyalist fugitives in case of another rebellion. But even this is not considered enough, for the same paper goes on to suggest a line of forts along the shore for the same purpose. How valuable must be a province which must all the time be held by the throat and half strangled now and then by way of preven-

tion! We were proceeding at once in the usual Brother Jonathan strain to thank God that we 're not as other men are, when we recollected that we also had our Ireland, and were engaged in holding our private and peculiar wolf by the ears.

It is the fashion with some persons to assert that the condition of the English and Irish laborer is worse than that of our American slave. Some are sincere in this opinion. Others, who care not a straw either for laborer or slave, assume it as an apology for their pro-slavery position. As far as the one circumstance of food is concerned, we are ready to allow that for the last two years the Irish peasant has been worse off than the slave. But in making the general comparison one very important element is overlooked. Pandora's box is very carefully sent to our wretched bondmen, but when they open it, they find that all the evils are correctly forwarded *as per invoice*, only Hope has somehow got lost out on the way. The great fallacy in the parallel seems to be that though we grant that men cannot be happy and starve at the same time, yet it does not follow that they are necessarily elevated to a state of perfect bliss by a bellyful of hominy.

Those who compare the physical condition of the Irish laborer and the slave should remember that

the potato-rot was not a calamity whose approach was calculated in the almanacs. Even Cobbett, though he abused the potato as an article of food, never enumerated treachery among its other bad qualities. Is there any reason why maize should not be attacked by a similar epidemic? If this calamity should take place, the only circumstance in favor of the slave, as compared with his poor brother over the ocean, would be put out of the question.

We began by speaking of the reluctance of the English people to have Smith O'Brien hanged, drawn, and quartered, and we called it a good sign as far as it went. Not that transportation with felons would not be a more barbarous punishment for such a man. But the circumstance merely shows that when you bring bloodshed directly and palpably before men's eyes they are revolted by it, though it be performed with a ceremonious observance of punctilious proprieties. Such a feeling, however, is rather a testimony in favor of human nature than a proof of the possession of right principle. It is like the horror which a person who eats beef and mutton every day of his life would feel in a slaughter-house. The people of England, through their government, perpetrate atrocities continually to which the execution of O'Brien and the others would be a mere trifle. And we do no better.

While we are wondering at the bad economy displayed by a nation in keeping a province in such a condition that fleets, armies, and fortifications are needed merely to hold it down, we cannot help thinking of our own three millions held in subjection by brute force, in whose aggregate we ourselves form units. It is our weight that presses down the slave at this moment.

We consider the trial and conviction of Drayton at our own seat of government, and during the session of our national legislature, to be infinitely more disgraceful to us than the condemnation of O'Brien is to England. Drayton is now lying in Washington jail, sentenced to twenty years imprisonment on a single indictment, and with seventy-one other indictments of the same kind hanging over him. His case is already well-nigh forgotten. Yet he has been punished for a simple act of humanity which we think well enough of human nature to suppose that there are few who would have refused to perform.

There are persons among us who spend a great deal of time and money in endeavoring to check the spread of Popery, and who enforce their arguments by appeals to the bygone horrors of the Inquisition and the long-extinguished fires of Smithfield. The enormities perpetrated daily under the cover of our slaveholding system and with the assistance of our

slaveholding government throw the Inquisition and Smithfield entirely into the shade. Slavery exercises a more complete spiritual tyranny than the Pope ever did in the palmiest days of his power. How long will it be before we are able to see as clearly the atrocities which are daily enacted before our eyes as those which have been dead and buried for centuries?

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As every one of our citizens who has completed the number of years required by the Constitution has a chance at the Presidency, we think that instruction in the composition of public documents should be made a part of the course of education in our public schools. The younger scholars might be put at once into guber-natorial messages. The next step would be into the reports of depart-mental secretaries, and the system would be completed by a year's practice in presidential messages. If every class were compelled to remain until each member of it had got through with the reading of his exercise, the natural desires of food and play would soon reduce even those most obstinately ambitious of rhetorical display within the limits of a Spartan brevity. The time at present devoted to the study of the boundaries of the United States (which, being as shifting by nature as some kinds of sand-bars, can never be permanently deposited in the memory) might be given up to the acquisition of this more practically useful science. Perhaps a more imme-

diate relief might be hoped from an amendment to the Constitution requiring Presidential messages to be transmitted to Congress through the medium of the magnetic telegraph. This would secure unintelligibility without the present necessary outlay of words.

President Polk, hopeless now alike of renomination and reëlection, takes his first instalment of revenge in a message nearly as long as a shilling novel, and even more worthy to rank as an original fiction. Should his farewell address be composed in the same retaliatory spirit, it will prolong the period of his tyranny over editors and other conscientious readers of state-papers to a period several hours sub-sequent to the legal date of his exit. We wonder that, while he was contrasting our condition with that of Europe, and while his discriminating eye was fixed upon Prussia, it did not occur to him to include, among his other parallels, one between a *boreocracy* and a *bureaucracy*. It would have been a congenial topic, and one not more foreign to the purpose of an annual message than many others which he has introduced.

The present message is in some sort valedictory. The Polkian leavetaking is, however, far from being a painful one, unless it be on the presidential side. And even there the grief, if there be any, is veiled

under an assumption of pride. The President recounts to his jilting mistress, the People, the countries he has stolen and then paid for, the glory he has won, and the statesmanship he has exhibited, as if to show what a valuable lover is in him discarded. There is something Belisarian in the position of the successful commander-in-chief thus dismissed to obscurity. His farewell, nevertheless, lacks the martial brevity. The greenest laurels would have become dry and sere during the delivery of it.

The President begins by an invocation of Providence. It has been observed of beggars that they commonly preface the larger sorts of lies with appeals of this description, and we may extend the observation to Chief Magistrates. After congratulating his fellow-citizens upon being the freest and most enlightened, he proceeds to speak of the *peaceful* annexation of Texas, and of the unhappy war forced upon us by a neighboring nation. He says that we (the American People) "recognize in all nations the right which we enjoy ourselves to change and reform their political institutions according to their own will and pleasure. Hence we do not look behind existing governments capable of maintaining their own authority." Most veracious President! One would imagine that he had just been giving a public reception to the Ambassador from Haiti.

It is truly ludicrous to witness the absurdities and contradictions into which a president is led by the necessity of administering the annual amount of glorification. Mr. Polk recognizes the right of every nation to change its form of government. Now from the context it is evident that the word *nation* does not here mean the government with which we entertain diplomatic relations, but the governed, — a doctrine which would justify our own slaves in an insurrection to-morrow. And he is unquestionably in the right. Much as we should regret such a catastrophe, there can be no doubt that if ever insurrection was justifiable, it is so in the case of our American slaves. "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam that is in thine own eye."

The President next enumerates the tracts of territory we have acquired during his administration. He endeavors to give us a proper idea of their magnitude and importance by several different modes of statement. First he tells us the number of square miles, then the number of acres, and finally assures us that our new possessions are as large as the continent of Europe. There is no doubt that if the blessings of Slavery were to be estimated by the number of acres over which it is likely to be extended, it would turn out to be one of the happiest institutions the human race ever enjoyed.

Next we are assured that the Mexican War has made us much more respected abroad, and convinced monarchical Europe that republicans can be as savage as other people. Mr. Polk seems to imagine that the Kings of the old world — who have as much as they can do to hold themselves upon their thrones with both hands — are only waiting for an opportunity to send an army over three thousand miles of ocean to subjugate us. He does not mention any particular sovereign, but we think he had the ferocious tyrant of Mecklenburg-Schwerin in his eye.

Before we apply ourselves to the kernel of the message, we prefer to go carefully over the enormous husk in which the author has enveloped it. He gives us a sketch of what he calls the "American System" from as far back as the year 1791. The most diverting part of it is that in which he gives the supposed reasons which influenced the early supporters of a Tariff. He says: "There was also something fascinating in the ease, luxury, and display of higher orders who drew their wealth from the toil of laboring millions. The authors of the system forgot to look down upon the poorer classes of the English population. They failed to perceive that the scantily fed and half-clad operatives were not only in abject poverty, but were bound in chains of oppressive servitude for the benefit of favored

classes who were the exclusive objects of the care of government." Now, would any one suspect that the author of this fine sentence had probably been shaved by a slave the very morning he wrote it? that the boots on his feet had been brushed, and the shirt on his back washed by a slave? Such flummery is absolutely disgusting.

But the kernel of the message is contained in the recommendations to Congress in regard to the new territory. Mr. Polk begins by drawing such a flattering picture of the agricultural, mineral, and commercial capabilities of the country as he thinks will be enough to bribe the free states to consent to any immediate settlement of the question. Then he recommends the Missouri Compromise line, or, failing that, he advises that the whole matter be left to the Supreme Court.

That some such proposition would be made every one expected. The most fatal blows at liberty have always been struck at these short sessions, when the election of a new Congress has rendered the members of the old more careless about the will of their constituents. Mr. Polk has the impudence to pretend that even the Missouri Compromise was a concession on the part of the slave states, and only excusable on the score of necessity. He purposely confounds the question of legislation in regard to

slavery in the states with the totally different one of slavery in the territories, and then proposes to leave the matter to a slaveholding court.

We hope, though faintly, that Congress may be so far afraid of Northern anti-slavery feeling as to reject the wily President's advice. Perhaps there is more ground for hope in the circumstance that the Northern Democrats may unite with the anti-extension Whigs in order to force the question over upon the first Congress under the new administration. One thing only is certain, that if slavery be admitted to the territories at all, Free Labor is necessarily excluded from the whole of them. President Polk goes over the old falsehood of their not being adapted to the Institution. But we remember too well the treachery of Texas, and also that slavery has never been so terribly cruel and destructive as where the more immediate thirst for gold has been excited by the existence of mines.

A WASHINGTON MONUMENT

It seems to us that money is never so uselessly spent as in building monuments, except perhaps in traveling to see them after they are built. Whatever man or event needs a pile of stones for memory does not deserve one, and whatever or whoever is worthy of such costly lapidation does not want it. Great men and great deeds live in history and in song. The hero, the wise man, the artist, all build their own monuments, broad-based as continents, lasting as love and reverence. The traveller feels that St. Peter's is less sacred to the inspired fisherman than to the inspired architect. Columbus has a hemisphere for commemoration. The obedient planets write forever in the sky the epitaphs of Copernicus and Newton. Our rivers swarm with the monuments of Fulton. And yet who shall tell us what mighty conqueror pitched those huge granite tents upon the desert's edge. He has stone enough, but is forgotten —

Caret quia vate sacro.

The field of Bannockburn was wholly Scotch, and

no weight of brass or marble could have ransomed it from that narrow nationality. But by and by comes along an Ayrshire peasant, hums a verse or two, and makes it cosmopolitan. Emerson's ode, simple and grand, shall tell posterity that an obelisk once displaced the sacred privacy of Concord field. How trivial and obtrusive would seem a pyramid heaped upon Plymouth Rock, holy with the footsteps of those who unlocked the future of mankind!

The age which builds monuments is that which has seen heroism fairly underground. As far as it can guess, the heroic is dead and decently buried, and the only duty left is to put up the gravestone and pay for the Latin. The living heroic does not borrow of the quarry, nor hire the sculptor. It builds religions and states, not tombs. It commemorates great actions by greater. When greatness has become traditional, then men make up the loss in stone and bronze. They who are most busy heaping stones upon dead prophets commonly find time to bestow a pebble or two on the live ones.

Perhaps no truly beautiful monument was ever erected. John Bull and his son Jonathan, with very strong predilections toward the rearing of memorials, have shown very questionable taste. It is hard to make beautiful anything so utterly useless. The

Celts were in one respect wiser. Nobody could criticise their cairns and barrows. As for us, we must have our extravagances this way, for no other reason than that other people do. Shall our fathers have an ounce less marble or a sentence less Latin than other people's? It would not be respectable. No. Our coffins must cost as much as any.

If we must needs have something to remember our great men by, statues would be better than anything else. For not only is there a natural desire in men to see how a famous person looked, but this kind of remembrance has also the farther advantage that we have a great and original sculptor of our own to make them for us. Probably the world has never had five such sculptors as Powers, and we ought to see to it that he has enough to do. Our present statues of Washington are poor. There is not one of them which we can look at with so much pleasure as upon that of Penn in front of the hospital in Philadelphia. However wanting in other respects, that figure has a simplicity and integrity about it which we miss in all the stone that has been chiselled in honor of Washington. The statue by Houdon has a vulgar swagger. That by Chantrey has a certain English dignity and solidity about it well befitting the subject, but the sculptor was afraid to make an American without a kind of

apology to ancient art in the drapery. Greenough's we have never seen, but we should consider the size as sufficient objection to it. Great men do not require to be represented as giants. The costume also is bad. The clothes that were good enough for the man are good enough for the marble. The objection of familiarity has no force, for it is merely one of time, — a transient consideration of which a fine work of art is entirely independent. Nothing could be uglier than a court-dress of the time of Charles the First, nothing more unbecoming than a suit of armor. Yet in Van Dyke's pictures they seemed natural, graceful, and dignified.

After all, Washington is not our representative American man. He is rather English than American. Daniel Boone is more like it, — adventurous, forever pushing westward, annexing by dint of long rifle and longer head, yet carrying with him a kind of law, and planting the seed of a commonwealth. Our art is likely to do better things with such a man than with Washington. But the monument at present proposed to be built to Washington is an obelisk five hundred feet high, springing from a square base presenting on every side a columned front. The Anglo-Saxon race have never shown much aptitude for any architecture except that of colonies and states. With stone and mortar they

have done little, and that meagre and imitative. Not sentimental nor eminently imbued with religious feeling, they have housed their religion worse than any other race. The cathedrals and abbeys of England and Scotland sprang from Norman brains. Use and not sentiment has been the Saxon characteristic. Accordingly their dwellings have been the most comfortable, their ideas of government the most practical, and their criticism (till inoculated from Germany) the coldest and most meagre in the world.

The pilgrims who came to New England in 1620 represented in tolerable completeness the Saxon element of English life. They built up a state and a commerce forthwith. Ere long they began to send out colonies. They could not have elbow-room enough on the continent while the French were seated to the north of them. They made a religion hard, square, and unyielding, and then constructed square boxes to hold it where they might be sure to find it once a week. For religion was a job of downright hard work, which they went at with their coats off. Organization, trade, and the sending out of new colonies, — these were their play. From such a race architecture for architecture's sake was not to be looked for. They have built best what was useful and practical, as ships, railroads, and aque-

ducts. In all the United States there is not a beautiful church, — or, if beautiful, it is not in any sense American. But we have handsome shops enough.

No nation should be more cautious in undertaking to erect a monument. The drawing of the one now proposed for Washington does not strike us favorably. We can perceive no peculiar appropriateness in it, and consequently no peculiar beauty. On the other hand, we find many incongruities. What is the meaning, for example, of the figure in front of the obelisk driving four horses abreast? There are such figures on some other monuments perhaps, borrowed from the antique, and there is something like it in Guido's Aurora, but where is its fitness? Sensible people do not drive horses in this manner, nor did we ever see anything like the chariot to which they are attached, except an ox cart or a dray. Then, too, the inscription is in Latin. Why? Because it is more generally understood? Then why not in French, which is more generally understood still? Or perhaps it is Classic? In that case, why did not the Romans use Greek in their inscriptions, — a language more classic than their own, and which was the French of the ancient world beside?

But we do not see the need of any monument at all, least of all in such an out of the way place as

the city of Washington. New York would be a more appropriate spot.

> "What needs my Shakespeare, for his honored bones,
> The labors of an age in pilèd stones?"

exclaims Milton, fresh from the Tempest or the Midsummer Night's Dream. And we may say the same of Washington. There is no such pressing danger of his being forgotten. If any state wish to build him a monument, let her do some good deed and say it is in honor of him. Let one build an asylum for discharged convicts, let another raise her colored citizens to an equality, let a third liberate her slaves. There will yet be monuments enough of this sort to be built, though we carve the whole continent into states.

We should not have apparently travelled out of our course to notice such a subject were it not that, while abolitionists ought to feel as much interested in the arts as others, the present undertaking has something other than a mere artistic aspect for them. Agents are canvassing the country in every direction collecting subscriptions for this object, and abolitionists will be called on for their aid as well as the rest. Now, although since General Taylor has been a candidate many worthy people seem to have forgotten every good quality of Washington, except that he was a slaveholder, this surely is not

the justest view of his character, nor that which abolitionists love to take. We would not forget that he held slaves, but neither would we forget that he was Washington, and, even if we were anxious that a pile of stones should be heaped up to his memory, we could never consent to give any the least aid toward building it in the District of Columbia. Let no shaft rise for so great and good a man in a market-place for human flesh ! If our Whig friends must keep reminding us that Washington held his fellow men in bondage, they cannot, at least, say that he was a slave-trader. Let no man, abolitionist or not, contribute to rear an obelisk within hearing of the manseller's hammer, and in front of which the wretched slave-coffle shall be driven to the hopeless South !

END OF VOLUME I.

ANTI-
SLAVERY
PAPERS
OF
JAMES
RUSSELL
LOWELL
I